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THE NEW YORKER

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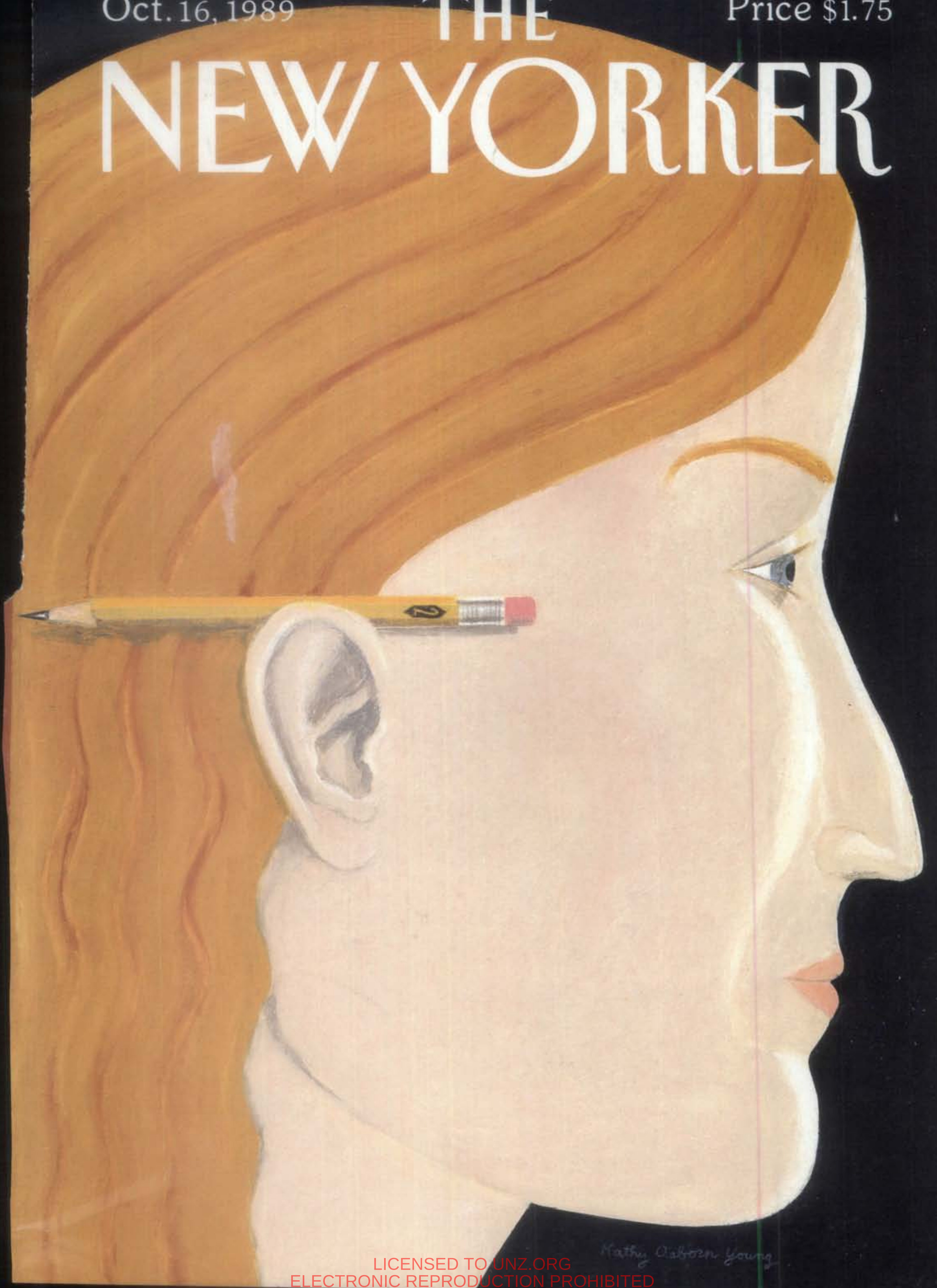
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COVER: *Kathy Osborn Young*

DRAWINGS: *Dana Fradon, Edward Koren, Jack Ziegler, Peter Steiner, Roz Chast, Arnie Levin, Ed Fisher, Warren Miller, Gahan Wilson, J. B. Handelsman, James Stevenson, Stan Hunt, Leo Cullum, Robert Weber, Mischa Richter, Robert Mankoff, Michael Crawford, William Steig, George Booth, Charles Barsotti, Mick Stevens*

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

A FRIEND who has been traveling in Europe writes:

Greetings from Paris. I've been here a few days. I'm staying with my girlfriend, a French actress I met at the hotel where I work in Juan-les-Pins. At the moment, I can hardly see anything, because the pair of contact lenses I have are too old to wear and the pair that are being sent to me haven't arrived yet. But being half blind does have its advantages.

For instance, a friend of mine is doing "Cats" here and he got my girlfriend and me free tickets. Now, "Cats" is a show made for the half blind. I was in the third row and the flashing lights look just great from there: the whole thing had a much more Impressionistic look than, say, "Sunday in the Park with George" ever achieved for me. In fact, "Cats" is really fun to look at when you really *can't* look at it. I think the Really Useful Theatre Company should do something really useful and hand out hallucinogens with the programs, so that everyone can enjoy "Cats" as much as I did.

The production has something else going for it: it was entirely in French, so I couldn't understand the lyrics. A cigarette butt of a song like "Memory" gains elegance when it starts off, "*Minuit*, la la la la la laaaaa la . . . " Undoubtedly, this is the production T. S. Eliot's ghost has prayed for. It's a strange show. Every time you begin mindlessly enjoying it, something incredibly offensive finds its way into view—loosely speaking, of course, in my case. But the French seemed to like it. I guess now that "Batman" is advertised on every bus stop and billboard in Paris, we have a France ready for "Cats." Lloyd Webber probably thinks all this makes him a serious composer—and maybe it does, for the French; but, then, the French think Jerry Lewis is a genius, too.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Circle Repertory Company—*The season opener* is **beside herself,** a new play by Joe Pintauro, directed by John Bishop. With Susan Bruce, Calista Flockhart, Lois Smith, and, in a supporting role, William Hurt. Previews through Oct. 15. Opens Oct. 17 at 8. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100.)

Dangerous Games—A pair of one-act dance dramas, called "Tango" and "Orfeo," conceived, choreographed, and directed by Graciela Daniele. Music by Astor Piazzolla and lyrics by William Finn. In previews. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 246-0102.)

Grand Hotel—A new musical, based on Vicki Baum's 1929 novel, which is directed and choreographed by Tommy Tune. Karen Akers, David Carroll, Michael Jeter, and Liliane Montevecchi are in the cast. Previews begin Oct. 17. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)

Mastergate—Larry Gelbart's satire of the Iran-Contra affair. Previews Oct. 9-11. Opens Oct. 12 at 7. (Criterion Center Stage Right, Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Secret Rapture—Blair Brown, Frances Conroy, and Mary Beth Hurt have the leading roles in David Hare's play. In previews. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

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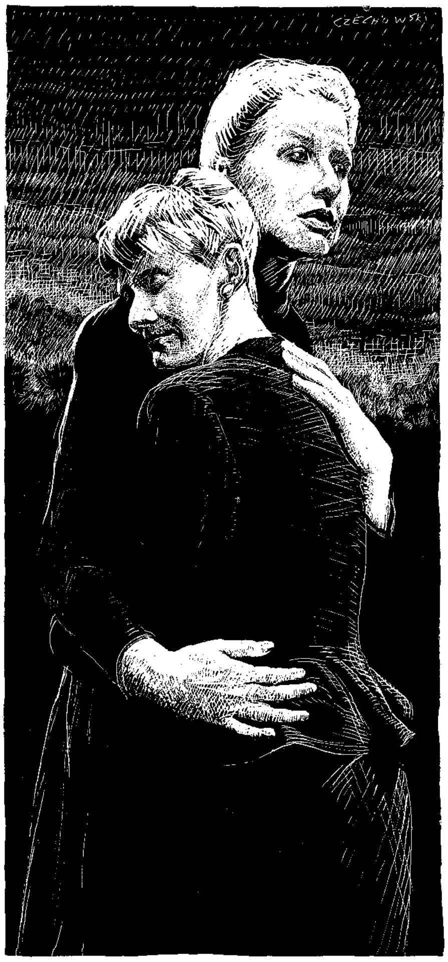

Mary Beth Hurt and Frances Conroy in "The Secret Rapture"

The Talented Tenth—Richard Wesley's new play, directed by M. Neema Barnette, and with Richard Lawson. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

RECENTLY OPENED

The Aunts—Mia Dillon, Bethel Leslie, and Ann Wedgeworth *in a play by Gary Bonasorte.* (Reviewed in this issue.) (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 307-7171.)

Big Hotel—The Ridiculous Theatre Company's revival of Charles Ludlam's 1967 play, directed by Everett Quinton. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271. Closes Oct. 22.)

Equity Library Theatre—The season kicks off with **wonderful town,** the musical version of "My Sister Eileen." Directed by Adrienne Weiss. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. 663-2028. Closes Oct. 22.)

Home Games—A comedy by Tom Ziegler. (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Closes Oct. 22.)

Hotel Martinique—A music-theatre piece by Kevin Malony that was inspired by Jonathan Kozol's articles on the homeless, published in this magazine. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391. Closes Oct. 22.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, display of *theatrical arts and crafts,* and canonization of Robbins and his era. Whethe the fifties was your generation or your pa ents', this is the show for you. (Reviewed i our issue of 3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Im perial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Lady in Question—Charles Busch's ne play, set in Germany during the Secon World War, is the perfect entertainment fo a cool autumn evening. It's less pointedly parody of one genre or movie than his las work, "Psycho Beach Party," was, and mor a travesty of an entire week's worth of TN *programming, compressed into a single* eve ning of theatre. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce b Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland i 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked t sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Unde Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises u the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comi life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tova Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Ron Holgate Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks are among th members of the splendid cast. (3/13/89 (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney' two-character play. Oct. 10-15, Joann Gleason and John Rubinstein. (Promenade Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—Presented by th Pearl Theatre Company. (Pearl Theatre, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

Only Kidding!—Jim Geoghan's comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue, about a Greek restaurant, is a knockout.) The characters are an aging Catskills type; a young comedy team still scrambling for a foothold; a jumpy writer; and a beef-brained manager. All the actors do well, under the lively direction of Larry Arrick. (5/29/89) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Orpheus Descending—A chaotic production of *Tennessee Williams' ramshackle play about* the passionate love affair between an Italian immigrant woman and a young man who goes from town to town, in the South, guitar in hand, making trouble. Vanessa Redgrave, though hardly convincing in the leading role, is certainly arresting. (10/9/89) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle, and Janet Zarish plays his adversary (with a difference). (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Privates on Parade—Peter Nichols' satiric and profound comedy with music (book and lyrics by Nichols, score by Denis King) about a troupe of entertainers assigned to the British Army in Malaysia in 1948. Jim Dale outdoes himself as the principal singer and dancer of the troupe, and Simon Jones is fine, too, as his commanding officer. Directed by Larry Carpenter. (9/4/89) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes Oct. 15.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell's play about a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. With Ellen Burstyn in the title, and only, role. Directed by Simon Callow. (2/27/88) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Showing Off—As comedy revues go, this one—written by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell—isn't at all bad. The winning performances by Mr. Bernstein, Marilyn Pasekoff, Jason Graae, and Valerie Wright often make the material seem better than it is, but ultimately they don't compensate for *the over-all smugness of what is essentially* life-style comedy. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Closes Oct. 15.)

Sweeney Todd—Bob Gunton and Beth Fowler in the York Theatre Company's production of the Sondheim musical, which had a brief run uptown last spring. Susan H. Schulman is the

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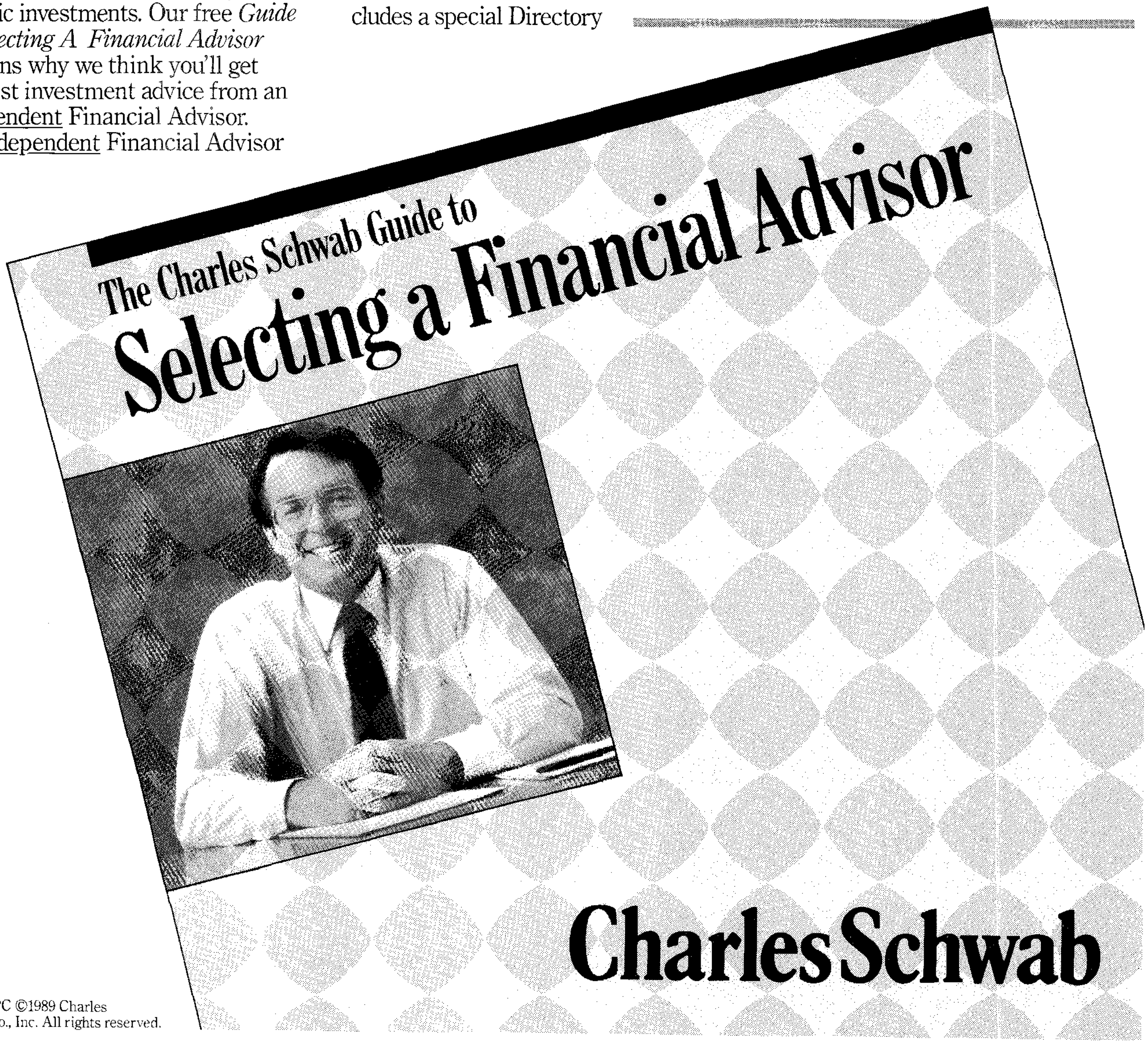

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

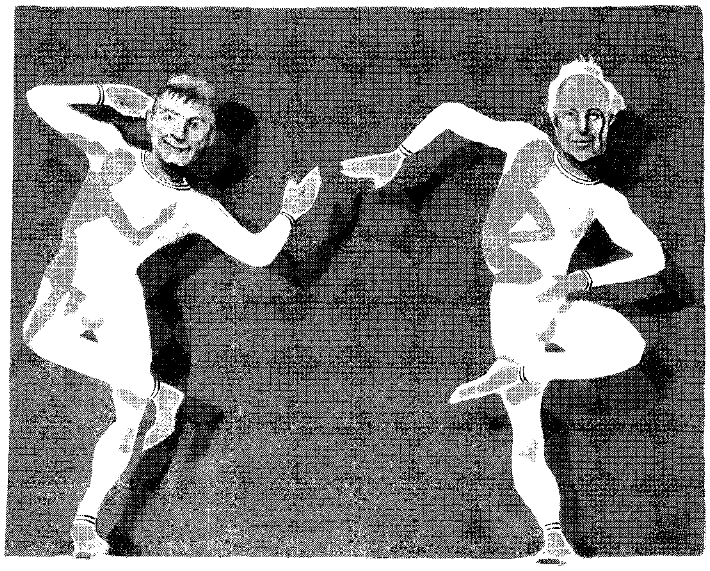
director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Ubu Repertory Theatre—Presenting **ABEL AND BELA** and **ARCHITRUC**, both by Robert Pinget. (15 W. 28th St. 679-7562. Closes Oct. 15.)

York Theatre Company—Presenting **FRANKIE**, a musical reworking of Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein." The book is by George Abbott (who, along with Donald Saddler, is co-directing), the score is by Joseph Turin, and the lyrics are by Gloria Nissenson. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Closes Oct. 29.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned twenty-nine this year. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1989:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Suzanne Blakeslee, Karen Murphy, Bill Carmichael, and Michael McGrath. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Christine Lahti. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE KATHY AND MO SHOW: PARALLEL LIVES:** Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play. With Tony Randall and A. Mapa. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **RUMORS:** This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by, among others, Ron Leibman, Charles Brown, and Jessica Walter, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)



Murray Louis and Alwin Nikolais

DANCE

ACORNS have been littering the pavement again, which reminds us that it's time to plan our date for the Balanchine "Nutcracker"—by Thanksgiving, the scarcest dance ticket in the city. We are already a little late, we learned when we called the New York State Theatre box office. In July, the office begins to hang on to mail orders; in early September, it begins to fill them. No phone reservations are accepted. By the time window sales open, on November 6, the majority of tickets to all performances—thirty-eight this year, from November 30 through December 31—will have been sold. The sharpest competition is for tickets to weekend matinées before Christmas, although December 24 (a Sunday this time) is usually a good bet.

"Nutcracker" fans do not agree on the best place to sit. Adult balletomanes often prefer the first ring, center, the ideal vantage point to scrutinize choreographic patterns as well as individual dancers. Children usually like to sit close to the action—in the front of the orchestra, or in the side seats of the first or second ring. We have seen "The Nutcracker" from all over the State Theatre, including the remote reaches of the fourth ring, standing room, and it has been our experience that each place has its advantages. In the orchestra, for instance, where there is aisleless seating, it's more awkward to retreat with a restive youngster than in one of the rings, where the distances to the exits are much shorter. And some of the effects, in the first act especially, look sensational from aloft—the snowflakes' geometry, the tree that grows. Last year, we escorted a three-year-old to the second ring and had a wonderful two hours, though we were poised to leave at any moment. And keep in mind that if the ballet doesn't grip a child the first time it may the second. A final note: the best preparation is to have heard Tchaikovsky's irresistible music played in a home where it is loved.

Martha Graha
Dance Compa
—Oct. 10 ar
Oct. 12 at
"American Do
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Chant," and "l
Penitente." . .
¶ Oct. 11 at
and Oct. 14 at
"Frescoes,
"Lamentation,
"Cortege of E
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. . . ¶ Oct. 13 a
8: "Diversion
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Rite of Spring
"Dance of Ver
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Heart," an
company chor
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¶ Oct. 14 at
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Garden," "Er
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Maze," "Steps in the Street" from "Chron
icle," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at
and Oct. 17 at 8: "Plain of Prayer," "Nigh
Journey," and three Denishawn-Grahar
solo works. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 7:30: "Diver
sion of Angels," "Deep Song," "Dark Mea
dow," and company choreography. (Cit
Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Throug
Oct. 22.)

Lucinda Childs Dance Company—A week-lon
engagement. Oct. 10 at 7:30, Oct. 11 an
Oct. 13 at 8, and Oct. 15 at 7:30: "Calyx,
Dance No. 1 from "Dance," and the Nev
York première of "Mayday." . . . ¶ Oct. 1
and Oct. 14 at 8, and Oct. 15 at 2: "Rise
from "Relative Calm," "Carnation," "Interi
or Drama," and "Mayday." (Joyce Theatre
175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

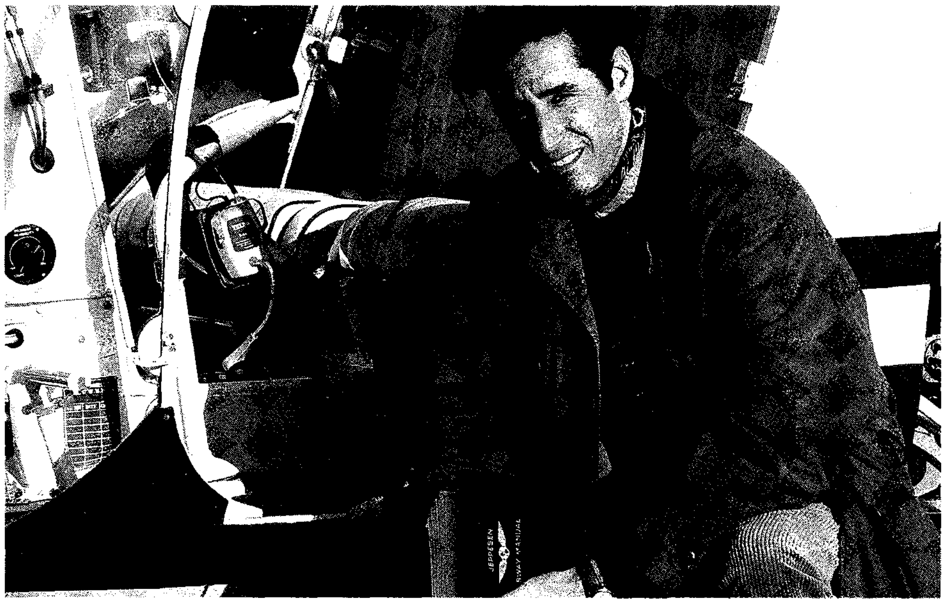
Nikolais and Louis Dance—A three-week seaso
opens with "Crucible," "10 Legs" (première)
"Video Game," "Persons & Structures," an
"Four Brubeck Pieces," on Oct. 17 at 7 an
Oct. 18 at 8. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eight
Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Nov. 5.

YOU DECIDE

*You're on the subway. You'v
finished the paper and looke
at enough people looking a
you with varying degrees o
suspicion. You can no longer spac
out on whatever mantra you've select-
ed for the day and you're not yet a
your stop. You think you're trapped
and have no choice but to study in
minute detail the ads for laxatives and
Lotto. Les Levine has a solution.*

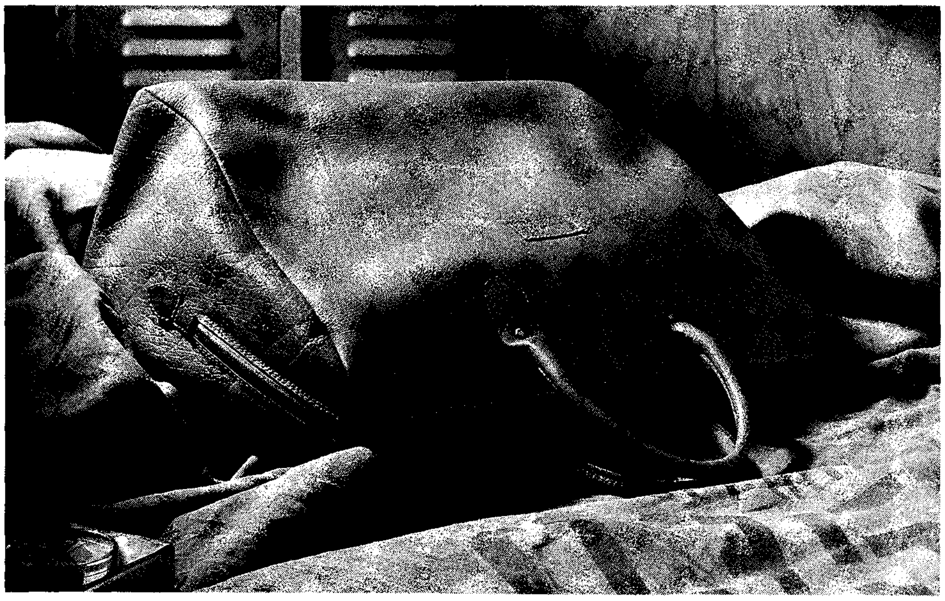
Over the last sixteen years, Levine's art has consisted of street billboards and posters that utilize ambiguous images and advertising slogans to confront pressing political issues; a project he did in London, Dublin, and Londonderry several years ago featured controversial billboards about the continuing religious conflict between England and Northern Ireland and was called "Blame God." For his current project, in the New York City subway system, he has mounted a campaign with two different "ads," one of each per car—4,800 in all. Their theme is art and society, the tone is ironic, and both the images (derived from Michelangelo) and the slogans ("Consume or Perish" and "Pray for More") are, in opposition to the advertisements beside them, purposefully enigmatic.

Whether you tend sheep or run a conglomerate makes



CDC

no difference at all. As long as you do it right.



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GOLD PFEIL

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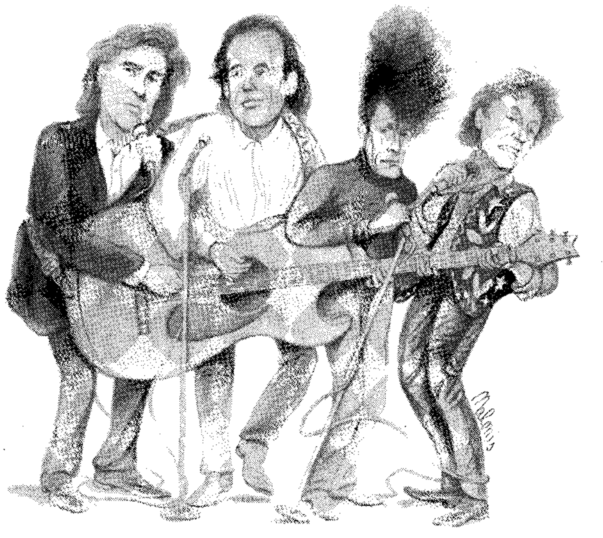
NIGHT LIFE

"WE were sitting around picking names," John Hiatt says of the days before his youngest daughter was born. "We had Georgia Rae for a girl and some completely wild ones—Casper Diego or Jett Presley—if it was a boy. I think it's a good thing it wasn't a boy, 'cause we were *stuck*." Hiatt, a Nashville-based singer-songwriter who just released a compilation album called "Y'All Caught?" and whose last record, "Slow Turning," still puts a knot in our chest, ended up with a child *and* a song named Georgia Rae. This week, Hiatt will appear at the Bottom Line at a songwriters' workshop, whose purpose is to show off some new songs and explain how some old songs were born. "It's what we used to do when I first came to Nashville," Hiatt says of the free event, where he will be in the fine company of Lyle Lovett, Guy Clark, and Joe Ely. "It's like a bunch of guys meeting out at the drag strip with their hot rods. 'Check out the headers on this one! Check out the exhaust pipes!' " The Marlboro Country Music Festival—which will also bring Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, John Prine, and George Strait to these parts in the coming weeks—is sponsoring the workshop and a pair of post-workshop performances by Hiatt and company. A hint of what one might hear from Hiatt? "I've written a couple of tunes that have to do with dreams my wife has had," he offers. "And she's been having some pretty wild ones."



Guy Clark, John Hiatt, Lyle Lovett, and Joe Ely at the Bottom Line

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**MONTGOMERY, PLANT & STRITCH,** a Houston-based singing group with a wide pop repertory, finish their engagement in the Oak Room on Oct. 14; the actress and singer **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** kicks off six weeks of cabaret on Oct. 18. Sets Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Thirty-year-olds in love call Mabel Godwin "a *scandal*." Now in her seventies, she remains a singer of racy jazz numbers, a devout chatterer, a wearer of gold lamé suits, and a pianist who perks along quite nicely to the accompaniment of a snare and a standup bass. Ms. Godwin performs Thursdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty. On Sundays, cornettist **LEE LORENZ** leads the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band, and on Mondays the Grove Street Stompers do their Dixieland thing. Arthur's is currently decorated for the holidays—Christmas, New Year's, Halloween, and St. Patrick's Day.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. The main attraction just now is the singer Jeff Harnar, whose show here is a tribute to the songwriting duo of Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven.

Bitter End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—The free passes to this club could pave most of Greenwich Village—and they often do. The Bitter End was all abuzz in the seventies, when it was a stopping point for the sort of singers whose records you can now order from television: Gordon Lightfoot, Melissa Manchester, Neil Sedaka. Aside from the rest rooms, which are what you'd expect to find during wartime, the place is pleasant enough. There's a platinum record from Blood, Sweat, & Tears, and a doorman who, when you ask what time the band is coming on, will tell you anything you want to hear.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A glitzy, color-coördinated jazz house, designed for maximum seating efficiency, where blue-suspendered waitresses sweep by your table bearing shrimp cocktails, champagne, and other trappings of the good life. After the show, out-of-towners flock to the upstairs souvenir shop, where, at last check, Blue Note golf balls were still available. Oct. 10-15 is in the hands of the Bronx-born singer and songwriter **ANGELA BOFILL**; on Oct. 17, **SARAH VAUGHAN,** the renowned diva with the four-octave range, begins a six-nighter. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great barn of a club, which, unlike many other such places, has—in addition to rock—tables, chairs (four hundred or so), good French fries, country music, folk music, music of a dubious nature, and miscellaneous theatrical entertainments. On Oct. 13, Marlboro Country Music presents an all-star C. & W. jamboree, with **GUY CLARK, JOE ELY, JOHN HIATT,** and **LYLE LOVETT.** Other attractions include **JOHNNY COPELAND** on Oct. 14 and folksters Eric Anderson and Dan Hicks on Oct. 16. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and, if need be, shush you. It's an institution. **CHICO FREEMAN,** a formidable sax man out of Chicago, works out through Oct. 15, with the pianist **JOHN HICKS** and the bassist **DON PATE.** On Oct. 16, **JUNIOR MANCE** (piano) and **MARTY RIVERA** (bass) take up residence. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. The veteran jazz crooner **ARTHUR PRYSOCK** lays claim to Oct. 10-15, with his quintet; the **DAVID MURRAY** quartet settles in on Oct. 17. Shows at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **JULIE WILSON,** the veteran singer and American-song aficionada, Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirt and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, i the Bemelmans Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides a the piano through Oct. 14; **BARBARA CARROL** begins a long run on Oct. 17. Music fron nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Thi room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs an cooler heads on weeknights, opens its door on Sundays to swing-music fans, most o whom come to Lindy. Feet jitter, skirts fly and a limber, nattily dressed gent gets a lool on his face that says "Watch my next move darlin'." Up by the stage, two men who hav come stag scatter their feet when the ban breaks into "Jumpin' at the Woodside." Th New York Swing Dance Society organize these Sunday-night meetings; on Oct. 15, i presents drummer Ronnie Cole's orchestra Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St (982-4052)—In the late seventies and earl eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, th Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Local rock has since diminished, but CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continu to fill the stage nightly. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A tin-roofed, hubcap-awninged, soul-food-serving chicken-shack theme bar. Exhibits include a rusted Orange Crush sign, a Pat Boone record jacket, bottle caps spelling out "Welcome," and other peckerwood flotsam. (If this place weren't a restaurant, it could be a flea market.) The clientele is mainly Northern urban. There's live music most nights, including gospel on Mondays, R. & B. on Wednesdays, and zydeco on Thursdays. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A low-ceilinged, belowstairs jazz room, its walls decorated with alternating bands of mirror and red plush, which will seem intimate to some people and too intimate to tall people, who may want to remove their top hats before entering. **MARK MURPHY,** an adventurous singer who likes to put words to famous bebop solos—and then to change gears and read from Jack Kerouac—will be here Oct. 10-15. **HELEN MERRILL,** who takes over for six nights beginning Oct. 17, was an acclaimed jazz singer in the fifties; after a long hiatus—during which, among other things, she had her own TV series in Italy—she has recently returned to the New York club scene. Mondays remain in the hands of **LES PAUL,** the guitarist, guitar builder, and overdubbing pioneer. Music from eight.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—A gorgeous, thirties-ish movie-set of a place. The restaurant and bar—forested and twilit—is about the size of a football field, with the piano at the fifty-yard line. This week: **HAL SCHAEFER** (Oct. 10-14) and **LYNN BERNSTEIN** (Oct. 15-17.)

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—A room where the tenth letter of the alphabet (uncapped and disguised as a quarter note) turns up often: on doors, window shades, matchbooks. It's also a room with a view (of Broadway) and with jazz (mostly of the mainstream type). The schedule: the Brazilian Fantasy Quartet on Oct. 9; Virg Dzurinko's trio on Oct. 10; Chip Jackson, Gene Bertoncini, and Jimmy Madison on Oct. 11; the Jeff Sick quartet on Oct. 12; Akira Tana's quartet on Oct. 13; Pete Yellin's foursome on Oct. 14; Andy Tuck on Oct. 16; Gary Haase's Conch Salad Band on Oct. 17; and **LYNN BERNSTEIN'S** trio on Oct. 18. Music from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. Stride-piano practitioner **JUDY CARMICHAEL** is in charge Oct. 10-14, with bassist **MIKE HASHIM**; pianist **GEOFF KEEZER** and bassist **PETE WASHINGTON** team up on Oct. 15; and **STEVE KUHN** takes a seat at the keyboard on Oct. 17 (with **RUFUS REID** on bass), and exits five nights later. Music from about nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performance space, where people come

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. This is probably the only place in town where an audience will listen politely to the sound of electric rakes being dragged across the windows. Upcoming events: the Rootless Cosmopolitans on Oct. 10 and Oct. 17; **TOM CORA** and **FRED FRITH** on Oct. 11; the **MARTY EHRLICH** quartet on Oct. 12; **ZAHAR** and **CARBON** (with **ELLIOTT SHARP**) on Oct. 13; and **DEFUNKT** on Oct. 14. Music after nine.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need all their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House factory may give them a boost. Royal Crescent Mob headlines on Oct. 12, with Carnival of Souls.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret, where a club soda costs about eight dollars. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking, "Is the water too warm?" **JERRY HERMAN,** the composer and lyricist for such Broadway biggies as "Mame," "La Cage aux Folles," and "Hello, Dolly!" (which opened twenty-five years ago), will be here for the next three weeks. Shows at nine and eleven-fifteen. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This rock establishment, which recently moved from the East Village to the former temple of excess Studio 54, is still a place where the customer is not always right. The signature feature of the previous address, the giant Big Brother video screen, has been preserved intact. Upstairs in the balcony, there are designated seating areas for industry and non-industry people. **BOB MOULD,** formerly of the Minnesota sensitive-thrash band Hüsker Dü, headlines on Oct. 13, with **BIG DIPPER.** Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SPO-DEE-O-DEE, 565 W. 23rd St., at Eleventh Ave. (206-1990)—A curious mixture of swank and down-home. (The name comes from the 1949 Stick McGhee song "Drinkin' Wine Spo-dee-o-dee," *which was Atlantic Records' first hit.)* The food is barbecued ribs and such, the music is mostly R. & B., and the furnishings include ballroom-size chandeliers, king-size sofas, and green velvet drapes sprinkled with stardust. The New York City Swing Band turns up on Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than in a ski lodge. Cornettist **NAT ADDERLEY** holds forth Oct. 10-15, with a hard-swinging sextet that includes saxophonist **SONNY FORTUNE.** The Timeless All Stars—**CEDAR WALTON, BOBBY HUTCHINSON, CURTIS FULLER,** and others—get under way on Oct. 17. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

SWEETWATERS, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, a sunken dance floor with a "Saturday Night Fever" ball, and a house photographer who offers to take a picture of you and your lady. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and rhythm and blues acts; the audience shouts encouragement as the band sings about "doin' it all night long" and "taking care of that thing." There's a lively bar, too, separated from the paying customers by tinted glass. The **OHIO PLAYERS,** the seventies funk band that gave us "Fire," "Skin Tight," and some of the era's most erotic album covers, are back in action, with a recently released album and a still sizzling stage show. They'll be appearing here Oct. 12-14.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—The old Tramps, a small Irish pub on East 15th Street, closed its doors last year, and this new incarnation, located on a Chelsea block that's fast becoming an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, indoor miniature golf, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), opened recently. The new place, about the size of a roller rink, has the converted-loft-space slickness much in evidence downtown lately, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. **SON SEALS** performs on Oct. 14.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, **TANIA MARIA,** a singer equally conversant in jazz and Latin music, performs Oct. 12-14. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half-century, this establishment was once described by the late Max Gordon as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Pianist **GERI ALLEN** takes part in a trio—with **CHARLIE HADEN** (bass), **PAUL MOTIAN** (drums)—Oct. 10-15; tenor-sax man **GEORGE COLEMAN** starts up with his quartet on Oct. 17. Mondays are reserved for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. At the piano: **JANE JARVIS** (Oct. 9-14) and **ROGER KELLAWAY** (Oct. 15.) Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

SUSANNE BARTSCH remains the most delightful social catalyst in a wig since the demise of the guy who wrote that diary, but the chain reaction she started with her once-a-month party at the Copa is heading for a meltdown. For two months now, the smell of success has turned acrid. Only Cecil B. De Mille would savor the waves of flesh that press elbow against cheek against shoulder as hundreds of people trying to get in are met by bouncers who got left behind when man started walking upright. Inside, what once had been spontaneous and spry now has become increasingly self-conscious and self-promoting. Brazen taste has become some individuals' substitution for charisma. The music is still splendid, some of the bodies still worthy of Herb Ritts, but only those who don't find rolfing painful enough need to be on the receiving end of a work boot crunching one's instep and the mouth it's attached to cracking, "I suppose you want a sorry?" No, just a way out.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL—At the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Laurie Anderson in her new work, "Empty Places." (Oct. 10-14 at 8, and Oct. 15 at 3 and 7.) . . . ¶ Reinhild Hoffmann and her dance company will perform "Machandel," adaptations of Grimms fairy tales, at BAM's Majestic Theatre. (Oct. 11 at 7, Oct. 12-14 at 8, and Oct. 15 at 3.) . . . ¶ "Pöhl Musik," a funk-metal group from West Germany. (Oct. 13-14 at 8.) . . . ¶ Susanne Linke, a dancer. (Oct. 17 at 7, and Oct. 18 at 8. Through Oct. 22.) . . . ¶ Karel Appel and Min Tanaka, dancers who mix butoh with roller skating. (Oct. 18 at 7. Through Oct. 22.) (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. The festival closes Dec. 3.)

SIEGFRIED & ROY—These two performers do classic illusions: they levitate anything not battened down, they saw women in half and pack them up into little boxes, and they keep transforming girls and cats into Roy. The illusions themselves are expertly achieved, the show is shrewdly paced, and there are lots of animals, many with big teeth. There are also lots of skits that seem to have been devised by the spirit of Josephine Baker channelling the spirit of Liberace while leafing through the Encyclopaedia Britannica with members of Metallica. (One is set on a Napoleonic-era battleground, with armies outfitted in spiked, befeathered helmets, garter belts, and G-strings to lift and separate.) The celebrated white tigers don't do much—one leaps onto a catwalk—but they're spectacular even at rest, and come both with and without stripes. As Siegfried notes, it's a show that demands "a labor of love and a lot of meat." (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Performances run through Oct. 15. For information about schedules and tickets, call 247-4777.)

THE HOUSE OF HORROR—Paul Zaloom's one-man show about poisons. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8, Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10, and Sundays at 3. Through Oct. 29.)

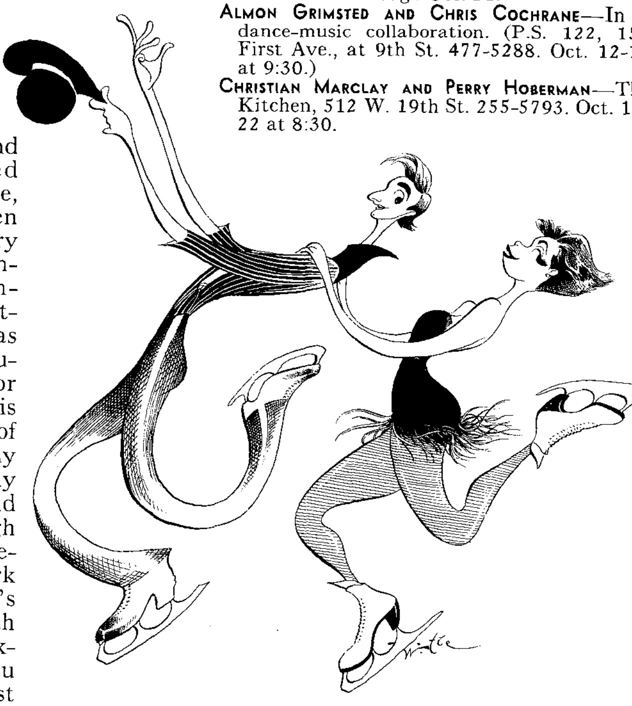
TORVILL & DEAN—The British medal-winning pair performing, of course, on ice. With sixteen Soviet skaters. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Oct. 14 at 8.)

"DIVA DEN"—Performances by four glamorous downtown stars: Marlene Menard, Liz Prince, Felicia March, and Joey Arias. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Oct. 12-14 at 10.)

SHA SHA HIGBY AND PETER VAN RIPER—Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Oct. 13-14 at 8:30. Through Oct. 21.

ALMON GRIMSTED AND CHRIS COCHRANE—In a dance-music collaboration. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Oct. 12-15 at 9:30.)

CHRISTIAN MARCLAY AND PERRY HOBERMAN—The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Oct. 19-22 at 8:30.



Torvill & Dean

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Self-portrait by Maura Sheehan

ART

Sue Coe's current show at the Galerie St. Etienne, with its hard-boiled, Chicago-style title, "Porkopolis—Animals and Industry," will not disappoint those who have come to expect a direct hit of anti-authoritarian artillery from this artist. For Coe, who is British-born and working class, the enemy has always been clear and always big. But neither the exhibition's strong title nor a prior knowledge of the artist's righteous missions—against apartheid, against police-state tactics anywhere—necessarily prepares one for the sheer expressive power and virtuosic technique with which Coe has tackled the American meat-processing industry.

"Porkopolis"—a huge body of work encompassing everything from paintings on paper to broadsides—is the result of two years' field research, and carries the shock of firsthand observation. In one piece, "Outside Detroit Slaughterhouse, 8 AM" (watercolor with gouache, graphite, and printer's ink), the artist makes her presence graphically explicit—but we do not need to be told. Coe stops just short of anthropomorphism when depicting porcine features, and therein resides the operative simile as well as the extended metaphor of "Porkopolis." The pigs' snouts that protrude from stacked crates in "Detroit Slaughterhouse" rhyme ever so naturally with the "snout" of a nearby truck driver, visible in his rearview mirror, while the nightmarish swirls and claustrophobic panic of "CO_2 Chamber" form as piercing and horrifically refreshed an image of holocaust as any to be seen. A leitmotiv of whitish vapors—cigarette smoke, chimney fumes, hogs' breath, ghostly presences—seeps through the show.

Coe is masterly: from Dickensian bombast through the graphic sign-language invective of John Heartfield and the beastly caricatures of George Grosz to the deceptively sensual tones of depravity of Honoré Daumier, she knows every rhetorical trick in the book.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show giving ample evidence of Velázquez's genius as a portraitist: very sober portraits of the very inbred Philip IV; a depiction of consummate virility in the form of the Count-Duke of Olivares (the power behind the throne) wielding his baton from atop his rearing horse, ready to charge into the Basque plain; a luscious portrayal of the Infanta Margarita, which sparkles more divinely than any precious gem; and loving depictions of buffoons and dwarfs. A satiric portrait of a jarringly offbeat Mars shows why no one in art history (with the possible exception of Titian) could paint drapery like Velázquez. A final note: the wildly varying surfaces of the paintings leave the viewer longing for a history of their alterations. . . . ¶ In celebration of photography's hundred and fiftieth anniversary, the museum has put together a show that presents work made between the World Wars by Europeans and Americans. The selection is from the museum's Ford Motor Company Collection. Through Dec. 31. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Pioneering Cubism": Georges Braque once recalled his working relationship with Pablo Picasso as being like that of "two mountain climbers roped together." This in-depth appreciation of their works from between 1907 and 1914 sometimes ventures to indicate who was leading the climb, but mostly it presents a host of evidence (almost four hundred paintings, collages, construction sculptures, and drawings) pointing to the heights these masters would later scale. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—If the curatorial intention of the Mario Merz exhibition was to extend the artist's renown and increase critical esteem for him in this country, this huge retrospective was a mistake. Merz was a signal figure of the nineteen-sixties Italian Arte Povera movement—a style derived from a mixture of "low" materials (mud, groceries, found objects, garbage, etc.), high tech (neon cathodes, glass, steel), and various romantic and classical yearnings—and he continues to enjoy considerable popularity in certain quarters here as well as near-ubiquitous representation in large European art shows. But despite his hip-looking neon Fibonacci-series numbers and his trademark, Bucky Fuller-ish igloos (these *can* look great in the right environment, ideally either a warehouse-like space or a ruined castle), most of this work seems vainglorious, shallow, mushily derivative (of Beuys as well as of Fuller), and pretentious in an irritatingly ditsy way. Futhermore, a number of objects that elsewhere can at least look stylish look awful in this marvellous building. Through Nov. 26. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of oils, watercolors, prints, and drawings by Edward Hopper The hundred and fifty works span the artist' career, and are drawn from the museum' collection. Through Nov. 5. . . . ¶ A curren show of works acquired over the past fifteen years provides a fascinating example of institutional collecting. Through Oct. 15. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charg after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—The museum's twenty-fifth National Print Exhibition (eighty-two works by about fifty artists focusses on developments in the field since the mid-eighties, such as the increasing use of serial imagery. Through Dec. 31. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.— show of works by George Ohr (1857-1918) the Mad Potter of Biloxi, who called his pots his "mud babies" and was so full of himself that he gave up his art when the world did not recognize his genius. But first he produced a remarkable body of funny, poetic and provocative works in austere colors: demure vases with nasty pockmarked lava glazes or slithering reptiles or handles that are elongated, angulated, or looped. Other vessels have been dented, pinched, or punched. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

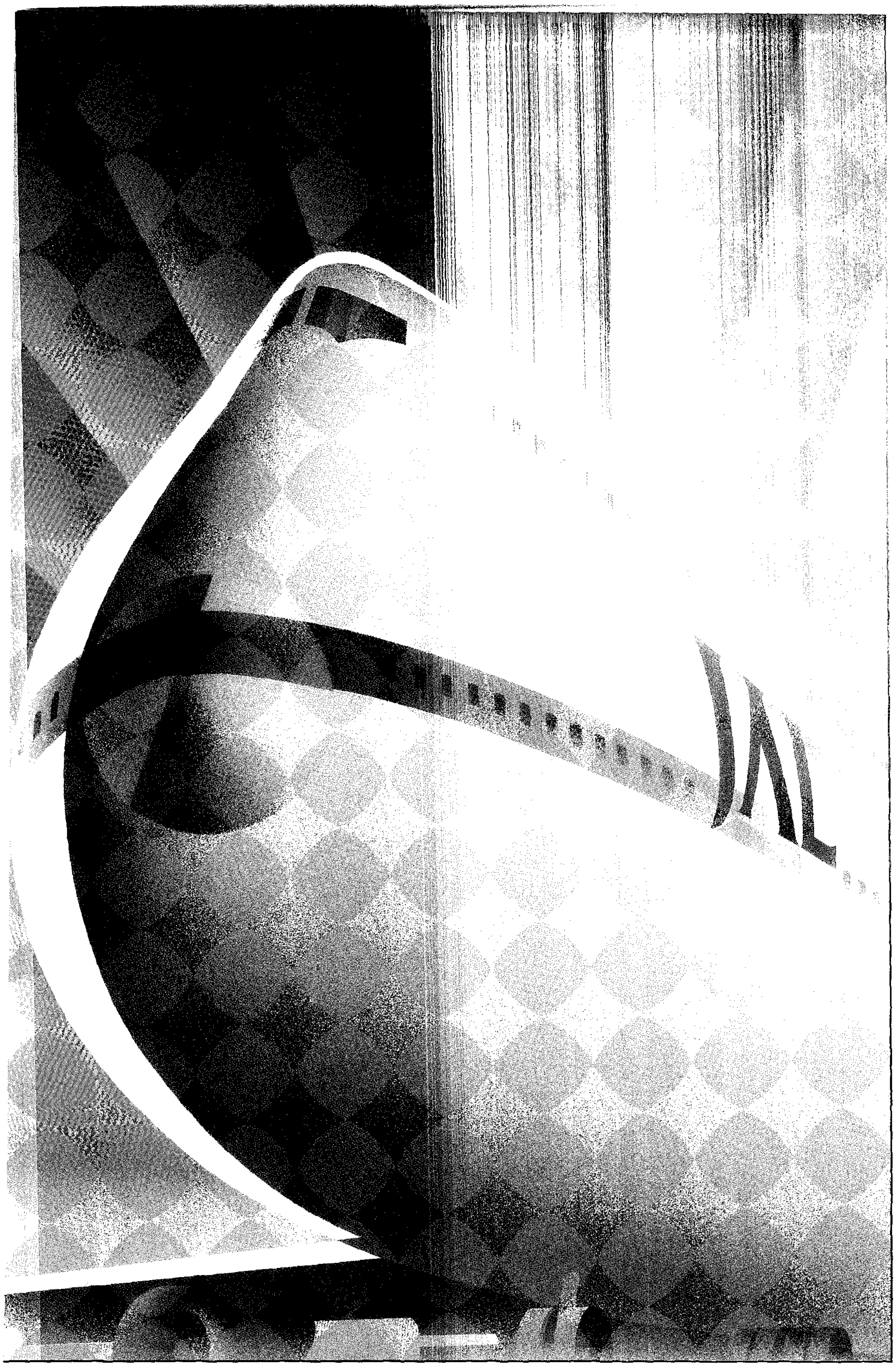
Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—A show of more than forty photographs by Ansel Adams. Starts Oct. 13. (Open daily, except Mondays 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Gardens and Ghettos," an exhibition of more than three hundred works made by or for Italian Jews. The show is divided into four periods: architectural fragments and antiquities from the Roman Empire, the Era of the City States (1300-1550), and the Era of the Ghettos (1550-1870) occupy the first floor, while paintings and sculptures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are on the second floor. (Open Mondays, except Oct. 9, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, except Oct. 15, from 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Exploring Rome: Piranesi and His Contemporaries": During the eighteenth century, artists flocked to Rome and produced drawings of grand neoclassic architectural fantasies. This show includes some fine examples of them, notably Robert Adam's sketches of picturesque fantasy ruins set in typical Italian landscapes and Giovanni Panini's watercolors of soaring barrel-vaulted arcades. But the grandeur of Piranesi—whose works are the centerpiece of this fine display—is without rival, be it in feverishly dark etchings of monumental prisons or in drawings for vault and wall decorations that transpose the pomp of heraldry to a symphonic scale. . . . ¶ A modest show paying tribute to Jean Cocteau on his centenary that is comically, Waspily un-Cocteau. This array of letters, sketches, "little magazines," and autographed scores in dim hallway cases, over which one must lean to see the drawings—for instance, of Jean Marais, and of Raymond Radiguet, Cocteau's great love—hanging on the wall, tends to make viewers look like squinting lepidopterists. Perhaps better thus pinned, however, than not pinned at all. Both shows through Nov. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Fantasy Furniture": Kitsch takes on epic proportions with this remarkable display of bizarre nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century furniture, including lacquered colonial exotica from the Brighton Pavilion; grotesque carved *torchères* of the Devil and his mistress in contemporary dress; rotund bears climbing up the legs of a desk; horn and antler extravaganzas; Victorian settees upholstered in thick and luscious fabric tubes; and blackamoors, frolicking putti, and nymphs from the Belle Époque, which even in this context bring new meaning to kitsch. Through Oct. 22. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—There is a certain predictability in the way the museum has tackled chaos, the theme of its current show. But some of the works on display are standouts, especially Orshi Drozdik's weird scattering of porcelain objects on a lead sheet and Cady Noland's "Model with Entropy" and "Celebrity Trash Spill"—bril-



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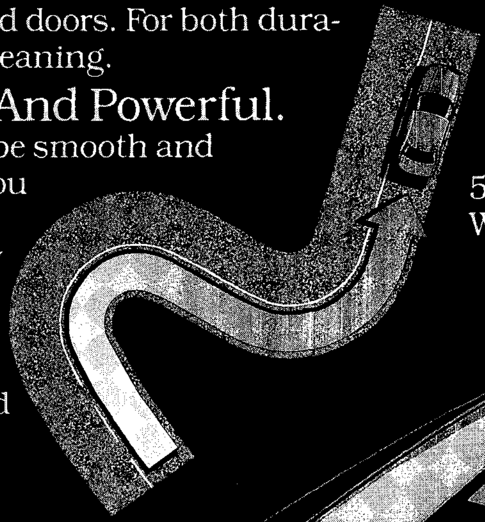

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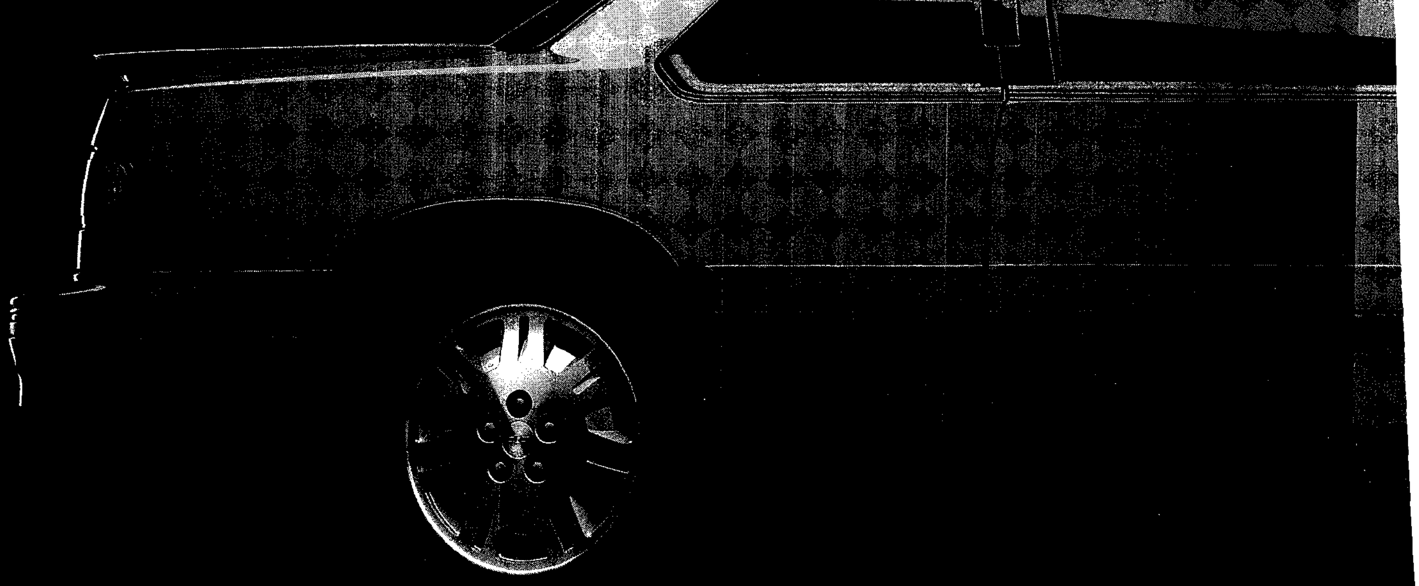

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TODAY'S CHEVROLET

liant examples of the city-dump-to-institutional-lost-and-found aesthetic genre. Through Nov. 26. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Stephen Antonakos—A sculptor who has pushed his splendid juxtapositions of colored light into the category of painting with these new works on wood panels. This uninspired solution to the dilemma of presenting light in a modest, collectible unit is, fortunately, outweighed by brilliant saturated light in such colors as pumpkin and coral. Through Oct. 14. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

Carole Robb—Entertaining paintings of Frank Langella as a bon-vivant Achilles either in leotards in a harem or bare-chested and contemplating the sea with his guerrillas. There are references to Dracula, Uccello, Velázquez, the "Demoiselles," and "Last Year at Marienbad." Although the artist's informal technique edges toward art-school realism, her light yet incisive view of social arrangements makes her a contemporary Pène du Bois. Through Oct. 26. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Paolo Soleri—This visionary architect and master of the wind chime exhibits a long crayon study (part of a hundred-and-ninety-foot scroll) for a park designed to reclaim mining land in desert mesa country—a tour de force of architectural drawing. The rest of this show, unfortunately, centers on the evolution of a space station that only a sci-fi nut could love and "arcology" drawings for futuristic cities which proffer a corny vision of harmony. Through Jan. 28. (New York Academy of Sciences, 2 E. 63rd St. Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 4.)

Joe Zucker—A zesty show of recent works by an artist known for his material inventions and eccentric processes—painting with paint-soaked cotton balls, for instance, or on foil—all in the name of a formal quest for larger, existential meaning. This is the second time that Zucker has presented paintings in which large wooden stretchers strung with nautical sash cord form the supports for images rendered in gelatinous, at times translucent acrylic coils (the process is a bit like weaving or pot-holder-making) that sometimes suggest stained glass, and at other times cake icing. This time, we find dark abstractions on the theme of "Cryro-Genics"; a work in black and green with I.V. tubing and a Vietnam theme, titled "Dean! This Is What I Was Doing While You Were in the Delta"; and several brilliantly colored, fanciful still-lifes in which the artist's personal hieroglyphic order of intimist signs, symbols, and props (his cat, his Martini, his lady love) dominate the scene. Through Oct. 28. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

"Lost and Found: The Object Transformed"—A display of delightful small assembled objects, including Donald Lipski's museum of his oddball *objets* in a revolving Timex display case, a Richard Long stone circle, some Gilbert and George postcard collages, a fine John Chamberlain crushed sculpture, and an insipid little machine of two waving butterflies by the usually magnetic Rebecca Horn. Through Oct. 14. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

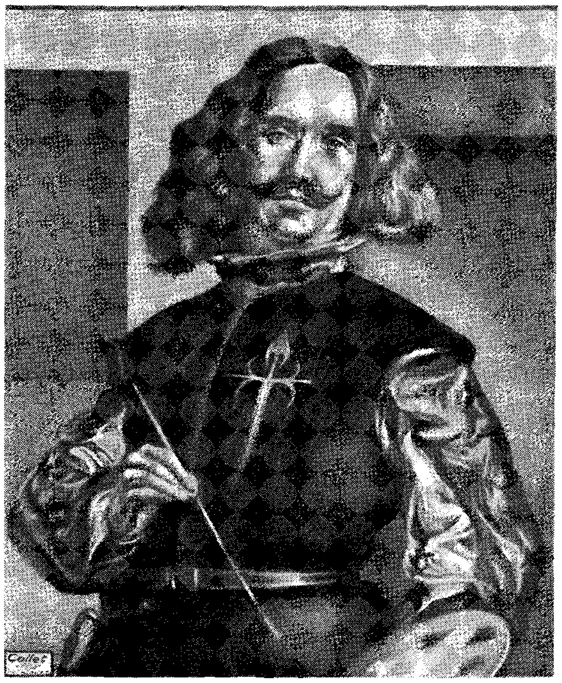
Short List—**NANCY GRAVES,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Oct. 28); **YVES KLEIN,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through Oct. 28); **GIACOMO MANZÙ,** Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. (open Mondays, closed Saturdays, through Nov. 3); **KENNETH NOLAND,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 11); **RAPHAEL SOYER,** Lewitt, 16 E. 79th St. (opens at noon, through Nov. 4).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Frederick Brown—These brassy, full-face portraits of such black musicians as Memphis Slim, Count Basie, and Dinah Washington may be called "The Blues," but they are so exuberantly painted (most with backgrounds of an insistent shade of sunshine yellow) that the show's spirit is much closer to "Is Everybody Happy?" Through Oct. 14. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jiří Georg Dokoupil—This is an extremely intelligent, entertaining, and versatile artist whose work appears in different guises at every show. This time, he has made paintings out of soot, using a candle as if it were a brush. The effect suggests the pointillism of Chuck Close, as well as the Germans Polke and Richter, but this is not Dokoupil's most visually appealing work. The idea, however, of depicting the Christie's and Sotheby's salesrooms (among other things) in so dire and Dickensian a fashion simply can't be beat. Through Oct. 21. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. . . . ¶ Kasmin, 580 Broadway, has a show of recent drawings.)

Cynthia Knott—A show mostly of dreary landscape paintings with lots of swirling atmosphere. Through Oct. 19. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)



Velázquez

Arnold Mesches / Ana Mendieta (1948-85)—Bravura paintings in overheated, acidic colors and fiery slashes of acrylic. Most incorporate huge crystal chandeliers, hovering like monstrous guardian angels. / Mendieta's most poignant works were private rituals and inaccessible earthworks, created in her native Cuba, that looked like feminized fossils; some are represented here by photographs and prints. There are also modest and beautiful drawings of similar figurative forms etched or painted onto large, brittle leaves. Through Oct. 21. (Lamagna, 50 W. 57th St.)

Richard Serra—With three new steel prop pieces the master of monumental moxie displays a much greater diversity of expression than he is usually credited with. One of them, a vertical beam supporting a vast horizontal beam that runs from wall to wall, brings new meaning to the ancient architectural challenge of the post and lintel. Through Oct. 14. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Each of Serra's newest black oil stick drawings—by far his most sculptural—depicts two propped forms. With titles such as "The United States Government Deprives Artists of Moral Rights," they signal a political motivation to works that seem to be purely abstract, and are a reminder that "Tilted Arc," even before the controversy, was a political statement. Through Oct. 14. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

William Tucker—New sculptures, on pedestals, with classical titles such as "Bucephalus" and "Xanthippe," that look anything but Greek: they evoke the naturalistic, gardens-and-grotto style of Romanticism, and also fossilized fecal remains. Through Oct. 28. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Group Show—An exhibit that conveys the splendid spirit of Milan in the fifties with only partial success. Lucio Fontana (1899-1968) is represented by some of his more decoratively colored and slashed *concett* *spaziale* paintings and some fine, modestl poetic pierced drawings; Enrico Baj by som violently brushy childlike paintings of children; and Piero Manzoni (1933-63) by among other works, a fresh-looking frame grid of cotton balls, a stretched, crease canvas, and the artist's most dastardly act o Dada, a can that holds true to its title "Merde d'Artiste." Through Oct. 14. (Maris del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Short List—**JOSEF ALBERS,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St (open Mondays, through Oct. 31); **JOE ANDO** and **EDDA RENOUF,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 4); **SUE COE,** Galerie St Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 4) **GRÉGOIRE MÜLLER,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St (through Oct. 28); **JULES OLITSKI,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 28); **HORACE PIPPIN,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 2) **REBECCA PURDUM,** Tilton, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 11); **ANNE RYAN,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 4); **LAWRENCE WEINER,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through Nov. 9).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Barbara Bloom—A room installation with the hilariously unmistakable theme of narcissism. It's a Wedgwood-green neoclassical octagon whose appointments include four Louis XVI-style chairs, printed, respectively, with a repeat pattern of Bloom's profile, her signature, her astrological chart, and an X-ray of her most incisive teeth. Through Oct. 14. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

Lydia Dona / David Winter—Accomplished layered paintings with schematic black diagrams and thrashes of dripping paint, and with titles such as "Circuits of Liquidity and the Shadows of Desire." / A large steel-and-aluminum sculpture in an odd scale (both monumental and miniaturized), which, like Dona's paintings, recalls chemical diagrams. Through Oct. 21. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Louise Fishman—Only a few years ago, Fishman was near the forefront of a wave of solid abstract painting, but these recent dark canvases about paint are not memorable and are generally less interesting than some of the works not on view but reproduced in the catalogue. Through Nov. 4. (Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway.)

Robert Gober—New sculptures that are purposefully blunt, very powerful, and somewhat bleak. Most of them, such as a metal drain set into a large white wall like some mystical piece of minimalist art, seem to be sublimations of sexual longing. Through Oct. 28. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

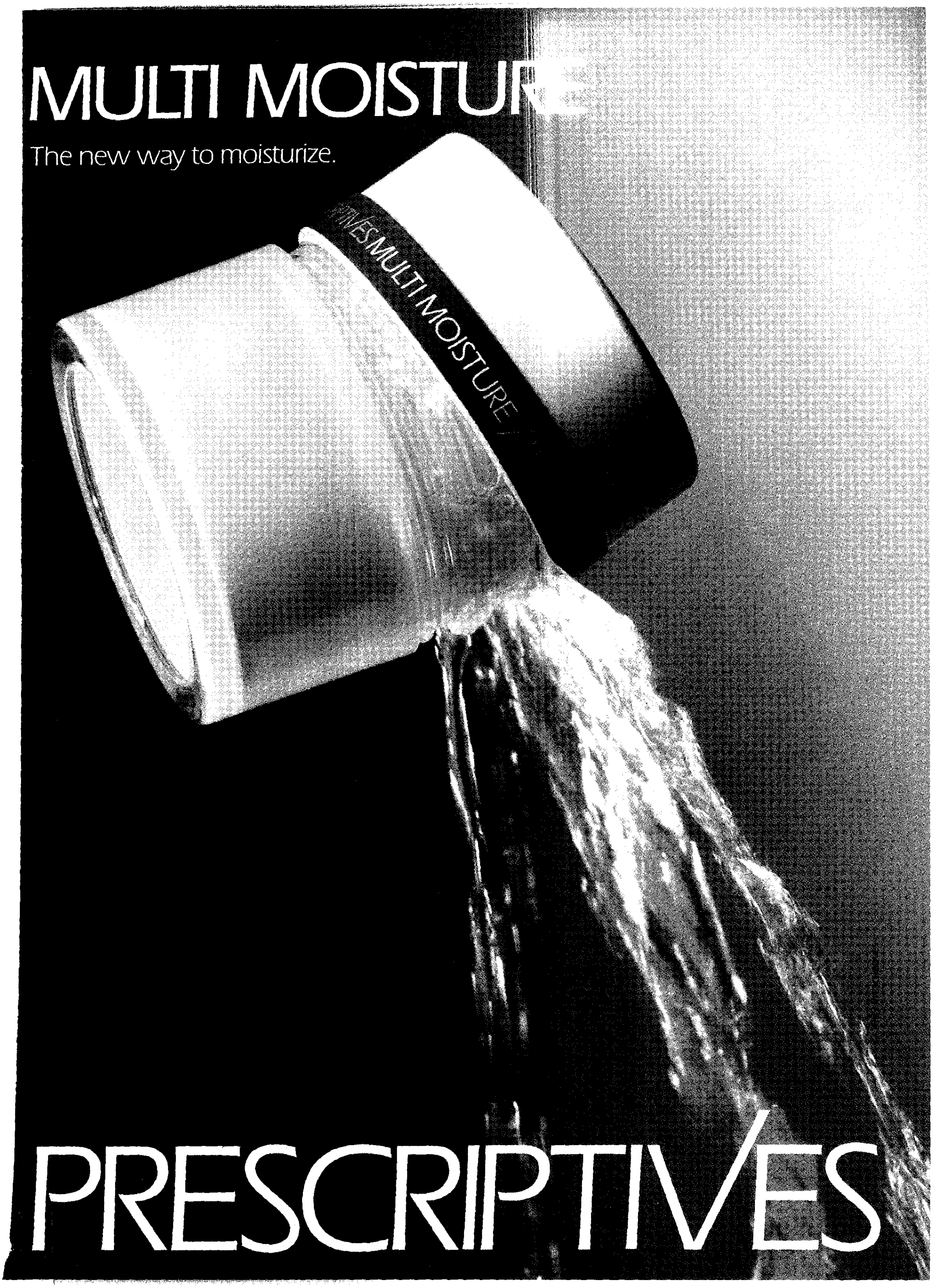
William Hawkins—Recent works by a Kentucky-born artist who first started to paint in 1979, at the age of eighty-four. "Skater (Eric Heiden)" (1988; enamel on Masonite) is an unself-consciously sweet capsule of youth, speed, power, and winter, and the work's glowing colors and loose brush style may remind some viewers of paintings by Georg Baselitz. A warm and quite wonderful show. Through Oct. 21. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Martin Kippenberger—These psychedelic, busy collages are bawdy in image and formal conceptualization and are somewhat annoying for their narcissistic imagery and feigned subversiveness. Through Oct. 18. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.)

Sherrie Levine—Theme: Duchamp's "Bachelors, Even." Movement: pristine-looking, hand-size frosted-glass *objets* based on the cryptic shapes of his "Large Glass" suitors, in pretty cherry-wood cases, spotlit. Variation: Levine's already familiar paintings resembling chessboards—Duchamp's game—in the rear gallery. This show is the polished, fashionable realization of a shrewd, tight idea. Through Oct. 14. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Scott Richter—Influenced equally by tribal masks and Renaissance torsos, these shields and checkerboards are remarkable for the beauty of their surfaces—especially the pieces involving beeswax or polyester resin—but are not as interestingly funky as the artist's work of a couple of years ago. Through Oct. 14. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Jack Risley / Silvia Kolbowski—Huge rubber-and-metal sculptures—resembling monstrous vacuum cleaners preparing to suction the earth of all living matter—that are oppressive yet funny. / This glib and unprovocatively self-serving installation consists of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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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framed reviews (published and unpublished) of a previous installation by the artist and some uninviting stools for contemplation, and makes use of a fireplace with real singed brick innards and a mantel. Through Oct. 14. (Postmasters, 80 Greene St.)

David Smith—This artist has been making paintings ("stochastic simulations") about the Vietnam War for at least eight years, and suddenly his obsessively repeated patterns evoking camouflage, bomber planes, and military decorations—once so eccentric—don't seem weird at all. There is an overfinished quality to most of this work (which will probably make it attractive to those drawn to commodity-like art), but this is a very interesting first New York solo show. Through Oct. 14. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

Carol Szymanski—Four steel floor pieces and one wall structure conceived during a year spent as a resident Prix de Rome recipient. They relate to mathematical systems (the Schwartz-Cristoffel transformation, for instance), have shapes like starbursts along with gridded planes, and have to do with the categorical processes of learning. This is technically spiffy, rigorously intellectualized work that seems heartfelt but offers no sensual gratification at all. Through Oct. 14. (Loughelton, 67 Prince St.)

Ben Vautier—This French postwar neo-Dadaist has been wreaking conceptual havoc for decades with word paintings such as the recent ones on view here. There's also a wall of small works from the last twenty years where the artist's mischievous conceptual silliness is given virtually free rein. Through Oct. 21. (Harvey, 537 Broadway.)

Krzysztof Wodiczko—A mixed-media installation with big slide projections of New York City outdoor scenes and with a contraption—suggesting a small missile shelter (and somewhat reminiscent of nineteen-seventies work by Vito Acconci)—that is intended as a prototype mobile home for the homeless. Through Oct. 28. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At the **cervera**, 470 Broome St.: Each work in this curious grouping is deliberately smart and dumb, some to great success—Mike Kelley's drawn triptych "Perversion of the Cone," Ann Messner's lead-wrapped steel cooler with a pierced metal bodily organ beside it, and Alan Belcher's hanging assemblage of fencing, plywood, and a photograph of a high-rise under construction. Through Oct. 28. . . . **sperone westwater**, 142 Greene St.: This appealing, casual grouping consists of some great early Robert Ryman white paintings; some very pretty beeswax paintings of trapped, flickering light by Domenico Bianchi; and some oddly glitzy constructions by Richard Tuttle that are crudely painted, involve arcs of bare light bulbs, and are materialistic in a vaporous way. Through Oct. 24.

Short List—**massimo antonaci** and **robert smithson**, Weber, 142 Greene St. (through Oct. 28); **max coyer**, Katzen-Brown, 475 Broome St. (through Oct. 14); **stephen greene**, Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 24); **jonathan lasker**, Audiello, 142 Greene St. (through Oct. 28); **hughie lee-smith**, Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Nov. 4); **rona pondick**, Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Oct. 28); **aldo rossi**, Protetch, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 21); **jan sawka**, Dorsky, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 28); **michelle stuart**, Fawbush, 568 Broadway (through Nov. 8); **rob wynne**, *112 Greene Street Gallery* (through Oct. 21).

OTHER GALLERIES

Henry Chotkowski—An uneven yet largely inventive show of collages made from cut-up magazines and newspapers of political or ecological interest, and of language-oriented assemblages such as a graphologist's analysis of grade-school penmanship. Through Oct. 28. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St.)

Reverend Howard Finster—According to one of this exhibition's very informative wall labels, "In 1976, at the age of 60, Reverend Howard Finster was divinely inspired to pick up a paintbrush and a can of Fixal tractor enamel to 'paint sacred art' "; fortunately, the Reverend *is still delivering his wacky fire-and-*brimstone painted sermons in rapid-fire succession. This retrospective of sorts contains a healthy dose of the eleven thousand-plus works he has created, including igloo-like high rises with diligent prayers in niches, and a rainstorm of books of knowledge, and with titles like "Self Portrait—My Brain Is Like a Wirehouse." Some are quite beautifully painted. Through Jan. 5. (PaineWebber Building, Sixth Ave. at 52nd St. Mondays through Fridays, 8 to 6.)

Maura Sheehan—Sheehan is practically the only artist keeping installation art alive in the object-obsessed New York gallery scene. Her *current environment is a rumination on reli*gion and violence in America called "Drinking, Homicide & Rebellion." The show is spooky and affecting, and includes many black statues of Christian saints wearing sinister masks, and a row of books burned beyond identification. Through Oct. 14. (Watson, 241 Lafayette St.)

"The Dark Sublime: Art at the End of Our Century"—It's hard to think "sublime" when staring at a dark landscape with dried whole fish attached to it, or a large sculpture of a seated figure with a woman's head, a mermaid's body, reptile-skin arms, and chicken feet. The show attempts to legitimize such sophomoric art by including a few sophisticated paintings by artists like Ross Bleckner and Nancy Haynes. Through Nov. 4. (Alan, 270 Lafayette St.)

"Dia de los Muertos II"—The "Day of the Dead" is a fascinating Central American religious ritual marked by processions and offerings of great folk fascination, but this exhibition inspired by the phenomenon and dedicated to children worldwide who have died because of "neglect [or] social or political abuse" is, with one or two exceptions, an array of good intentions and bad art. Through Nov. 4. (Alternative Museum, 17 White St.)

Group Show—One of the most valued activities of Artists Space is the annual exhibition drawn from its extensive slide file of work by unknown artists. This year's group of ten is dominated not by Young Turks but by artists in their thirties, whose work is marked by an overriding academicism. The possible exception is Teddy Schapiro, whose minty, surreal paintings of idealized suburbanites may look somewhat familiar, but are nonetheless funny and naïvely poignant. Through Nov. 4. (223 West Broadway.)

NOT OCCUPIED

And what's that lovely outhouse doing in the middle of the Max Protetch Gallery? It's the centerpiece of the Aldo Rossi show, thank you, and that's no outhouse, it's a beach cabaña; set a blue sea in the background and you've got as pretty an image as contemporary architecture can produce. Still, the privy impression isn't farfetched. For one thing, since this is an architecture show, you naturally think of construction sites, complete with Johnnies-on-the-spot.

Some of the drawings in the show are studies of New York streets, executed with a funkiness the name Aldo Rossi doesn't usually evoke. Maybe it hasn't escaped the architect's attention that one of the funkier legacies of the Koch years is the use of streets for emergency relief. The Mayor might think about using some of those unspent campaign funds to build a network of curbside Rossi cabins. We can't think of a handsomer way to remember him.

PHOTOGRAPHY

THERE have been a lot of Berenice Abbott exhibitions, but none as all-encompassing as the one curated by Julia Van Haaften that opened last week in the Gottesman Exhibition Hall, at the New York Public Library.

"I took to photography like a duck to water" is how Abbott describes her relationship to the medium, and she does swim in its possibilities without ever seeming to drown in the usual ambition that stales out so many modernist photographers: she lacks their obsession with form to the detriment of a picture's energy. Although the photographs on view span five decades, for the most part they're not nostalgic in feeling: Abbott's eye is too tough and unsentimental. Also, many of the people she chose to photograph were so far ahead that we're still catching up with them, particularly the women—Sylvia Beach, Janet Flanner, Djuna Barnes, Jane Heap, Margaret Anderson.

The only portion of the show that looks dated, funnily enough, is the section subtitled "Science." Yes, there are images that look as if something important were being worked out, but what about the one of half an apple? Or a walnut? Or a bouncing golf ball? The best of Abbott's "science" images is a photograph of a specimen of penicillin mold that was apparently the size of a fifty-cent piece. At its new scale it looks like a fluffy beret—definitely an artist's view.

The largest section of the exhibition covers Abbott's New York pictures. A couple of these, views of the understructures of the R.K.O. Building and the former RCA Building, made us realize how rare it is to see pictures that focus on the bottom end of a skyscraper. Once again, in these asbestos-blowup days, that's where the action is.

Abbott was also an inventor, and a sensible one. Among her many designs: a jacket that has lots of pockets, for all the paraphernalia a photographer has to carry. The young man who walked us through the show referred to the jacket lovingly as "early Banana Republic."

Short List—**berenice abbott**, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (open daily except Sundays), and Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (opens Saturdays at noon, through Nov. 5); **lewis baltz**, Lorence-Monk, 568 Broadway, and Castelli, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 14); **clarence sinclair bull**, Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. (opens at noon, through Oct. 28); **pol bury**, Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St. (opens at noon, through Oct. 28); **lynn davis**, Lowinsky, 584 Broadway (through Nov. 4); **david finn**, Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 14); **kathy grove** and **carl toth**, Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 14); **andreas gursky**, 303 Gallery, 127 Spring St. (through Oct. 14); **david robbins**, American Fine Arts, 40 Wooster St. (through Oct. 27); **lorna simpson**, Baer, 270 Lafayette St. (through Oct. 14); **boyd webb**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 14); **weegee**, Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. (open Wednesdays until 8:30, through Oct. 28).

MUSIC

GIOACCHINO ROSSINI died in Paris in 1868, at the age of seventy-six, nearly forty years after his last opera had its première there. His retirement—rather, his career as a sage observer of the musical world, a celebrated host, a traveller, a composer of occasional pieces, and a dispenser of bons mots—lasted longer than his youth and his brilliant operatic career put together. The operatic stage he had dominated had long since been taken over by Donizetti, Meyerbeer, and, above all, Verdi.

Rossini's relations with the last-named had sometimes been cool; "Rossini" was at times the rallying cry of Verdi's conservative detractors. But in the old man's last year the big new production at the opera was Verdi's "Don Carlos," and Rossini delivered himself of the opinion that if Verdi "returns to Paris he must get himself very well paid for it, since . . . he is the only composer capable of writing grand opera." Verdi wasn't eager to write for Paris again, or, so he said, for anywhere else. But four days after Rossini's death he wrote to his publisher in Milan and proposed an unusual tribute: all the leading Italian composers should join in composing a Requiem Mass, to "prove how much we all revere this man." The project was undertaken to a point—the Mass was composed but quietly dropped without a performance.

Why would anyone now want to revive this "Messa per Rossini"? For one thing, Verdi's contribution was the Libera Me, and when another Italian giant died (the novelist Alessandro Manzoni) that movement became the seed of one of the greatest musical requiems ever conceived. For another, there is always the chance that something really interesting and unexpected will emerge from the work of the "Messa" 's other composers, who ranged from Antonio Buzzolla to Teodulo Mabellini. Philip Gossett, the operatic scholar from Chicago who oversees the critical edition of Verdi's operas, said to the *Times* of these composers, "We have not merely underestimated them, but are at present so ignorant of what was going on that we can't even begin to make a serious judgment." We can begin, at least, at the New York Philharmonic this week, where the "Messa per Rossini"—played for the first time in this country—will form the subscription program, under the noted Bach conductor Helmuth Rilling.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**PORGY AND BESS,** with Priscilla Baskerville, Marvis Martin, Camellia Johnson, Michael Smartt, and Ben Holt; James Levine conducting. (Oct. 9 at 8; Oct. 13 at 8, when Charles Williams will sing the role of Sportin' Life; and Oct. 17 at 8.) . . . **IL TRITTICO,** consisting of three short operas—"Il Tabarro," with Teresa Stratas, Placido Domingo, and Juan Pons; "Suor Angelica," with Teresa Stratas, Florence Quivar, and Joyce Guyer; and "Gianni Schicchi," with Teresa Stratas, Juan Pons, and Vinson Cole. James Levine conducting. (Oct. 10 at 8; and Oct. 14 at 8, when Diana Soviero, Mignon Dunn, and Betsy Norden will perform in "Suor Angelica.") . . . **AIDA,** with Aprile Millo, Stefania Toczyska, Nicola Martinucci, and Juan Pons; Christian Badea. (Oct. 11 at 8.) . . . With Alessandra Marc, Stefania Toczyska, Nicola Martinucci, and Juan Pons; Christian Badea. (Oct. 14 at 1:30 and Oct. 18 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME,** with Hei-Kyung Hong, Sona Ghazarian, Richard Leech, and Brian Schexnayder; Donato Renzetti. (Oct. 12 at 8.) . . . **LA TRAVIATA,** a new production, with Edita Gruberova, Neil Shicoff, and Wolfgang Brendel; Carlos Kleiber. (Oct. 16 at 7.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—The opera's orchestra is on strike. For updated information about performances and the exchange or refund of tickets, call 870-5570.

AMERICAN CHAMBER OPERA COMPANY—Presenting final performances of "The Mighty Casey," an opera by William Schuman based on E. L. Thayer's poem about baseball in Mudville. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. 517-0475. Oct. 13-14 at 8.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting final performances of "Don Giovanni." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Oct. 13-14 at 7:30 and Oct. 15 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Helmuth Rilling conducting. Oct. 10 at 8: Bach's B-Minor Mass. With Sylvia McNair, soprano; Cornelia Kallisch, mezzo-soprano; Howard Crook, tenor; Mark Pedrotti, bass; and the Gächinger Kantorei. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 8, Oct. 13 at 2, Oct. 14 at 8, and Oct. 17 at 7:30: The American première of "Messa per Rossini." With Gabriela Beňačková, soprano; Florence Quivar and Cornelia Kallisch, mezzo-sopranos (alternating); James Wagner, tenor; Jacob Will, baritone; Brian Matthews, bass; and the Gächinger Kantorei.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY—Herbert Blomstedt conducting. With Cho-Liang Lin, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 10 at 8.) . . . ¶ With Vladimir Feltsman, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 11 at 8.)

BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—Seiji Ozawa conducting Mahler's Ninth Symphony. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 11-12 at 8.)

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—Benjamin Zander conducting works by J. Strauss and Mahler. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 15 at 3.)

WARSAW SINFONIA—Yehudi Menuhin conducting. With Robert McDuffie, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 15 at 7:30.)

BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC—Lukas Foss conducting works by Mozart and Tchaikovsky. With Benita Valente, soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 15 at 8.)

ALUMNI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Jonathan Sternberg conducting. With Gilbert Kalish, piano; Charles Libove, violin; Myron Rosenblum, viola d'amore; and others. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. 777-3240. Oct. 11 at 7:30.)

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY—George Rothman conducting a program of works by Honegger, Ravel, and Dutilleux. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 12 at 8.)

NEW YORK POPS—Skitch Henderson conducting works by Beethoven, Copland, Sousa, and others. With the United States Coast Guard Band. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 13 at 8, and Oct. 14 at 2.)

MANHATTAN SYMPHONY—Gunther Schuller conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Oct. 13 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

PHILHARMONIA VIRTUOSI—Richard Kapp conducting an all-Bach program. With guest soloists. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980. Oct. 13 at 8.)

ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Performing works by Gluck, Mozart, Barber, and Shostakovich. With Håkan Hagegård, baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 14 at 8.)

RECITALS

JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET—Playing George Perle's eighth string quartet, "Windows of Order." (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 10 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

YOUNG UCK KIM AND PETER SERKIN—Violin and piano, performing the first two of three concerts of all the Beethoven violin sonatas. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd

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MUSIC—Cont'd

St. 415-5440. Oct. 11 and Oct. 18 at 8.)

Prague String Quartet—With Paul Tobias, cello. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Oct. 12 at 5:45.)

Jeffrey Siegel—Piano, performing and talking about works by Beethoven. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 12 at 8.)

Group for Contemporary Music—Performing works by Wuorinen and Babbitt. (Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. 360-3503. Oct. 12-13 at 8.)

Paul Neubauer and Margo Garrett—Viola and piano. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 13 at 8.)

John O'Conor—Piano, performing Beethoven Sonatas Nos. 16, 17, 18, and 21. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 13 at 8.)

Shomyo—Ten Japanese Buddhist priests in a program of ritual chanting. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Oct. 13-16 at 8.)

Downtown Chamber and Opera Players—Performing vocal and instrumental works by Frederick Koch, Schumann, and Poulenc. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Oct. 15 at 4. For information about tickets, call 877-3399.)

Guarneri Quartet—Playing works by Haydn, Lutoslawski, and Schumann. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 14 at 8.)

Composers String Quartet—Performing works by Mozart, Ravel, and Britten. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Oct. 15 at 3. For information about tickets, call 854-7799.)

English Concert—Trevor Pinnock conducting chamber works by Bach, Vivaldi, and Handel. With Paul Goodwin, oboe d'amore, and Simon Standage, violin. (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 15 at 3.)

Music Before 1800—Presenting Stephen Stubbs, lute; Andrew Lawrence-King, harp; and Paul Hillier, baritone. (Corpus Christi Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. Oct. 15 at 4. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York Camerata—In a program of works by Gabriel Pierné, Joseph Marx, Michael White, and Shostakovich. (St. John's in the Village, 218 W. 11th St., at Waverly Pl. 243-6192. Oct. 15 at 5.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—The first concerts under the direction of Fred Sherry. The group will be playing compositions by Brahms, Stravinsky, and Wolpe. With guest artists, including Frank Morelli, bassoon, and Pamela Frank, violin, and with artists of the society. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 15 at 5 and Oct. 17 at 7:30.)

Chamber Sound—In a program of works by Poulenc, Mozart, and Ravel, among others. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 16 at 8.)

Shostakovich String Quartets—The third in a series of four concerts by the Manhattan String Quartet. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Oct. 16 at 8.)

Abbey Simon—Piano, in an all-Chopin program. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 17 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

The Rolling Stones—Burying the hatchet and lighting up the past, Keith and Mick have gathered up the boys for the last great tour of the eighties. The hot cover stars of *Time*, *Rolling Stone*, *Forbes*, etc., have had much written about the amount of money they'll make on this tour (about a hundred million dollars), their ages (two hundred and thirty-three years, collectively), and the fact that their audience has grown both older and younger (parents and children). Unlike the nostalgia-trippin' Who, the Stones have released a new album, "Steel Wheels," that may help them carry the weight of a legendary past. The record is a very successful, if calculated, return to the tough, fresh music of "Some Girls" and "Tattoo You," although it has less of a lyrical bite. The show, mounted on a huge industrial stage, brings together twenty-five years of Stones songs—it's the richest catalogue in rock and roll. Recently, Mick Jagger said, "The band is an animal that has its own musical personality." Here's hoping it roars. (Shea Stadium. 307-7171. Oct. 10 at 7.)

The Waterboys—A blend of West-of-Ireland hoedown and Van Morrison-style raveup will be the fare, with fiddle and mandolin matching rock guitar and drums. Mike Scott, the Waterboys' singer and songwriter, has a yearning, slightly sobbing voice that is pleasingly reminiscent of the American folk-rocker Steve Forbert. Like their grittier city cousins and fellow-countrymen the Pogues, the Waterboys are a rousing, chaotic, and intoxicating live band. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 17-18 at 8.)

Bob Dylan—Beacon Theatre. Oct. 10-13 at 8.

Public Image Ltd.—With Flesh for Lulu. (The Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. Oct. 11 at 8.)

David Hykes—With Djamchid Chemirani. (Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St. Oct. 13 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Earl Klugh—With Chris Rock. (Beacon Theatre. Oct. 14 at 8.)

Gordon Lightfoot—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Oct. 16 at 8.

Criterion Cabaret—Through Oct. 15: Swing-era singers Helen O'Connell, Kay Starr, and Margaret Whiting. . . . ¶ Starting Oct. 17: David Brenner. (Broadway at 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Roulette—Oct. 13: Bill Frisell. . . . ¶ Oct. 14: David Myers and Gen Ken Montgomery. . . . ¶ Oct. 15: Diana Meckley and Eric Mandat. (228 West Broadway. Evenings at 9. For information about tickets, call 219-8242.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Jets—Vs. the Los Angeles Raiders, Oct. 9 at 9.

Giants—Vs. the Washington Redskins, Oct. 15 at 1.

Rangers—Vs. the Calgary Flames, Oct. 11. . . . ¶ Vs. the Pittsburgh Penguins, Oct. 15. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Black Hawks, Oct. 17. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Oct. 14 at 5:05. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Oct. 17 at 7:35.

(The Jets and the Giants play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. For information about Jets tickets, call 421-6600; for information about Giants tickets, call 1-201 935-8111. The Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; and the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 587-9222.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Champagne and the Frizette are on Oct. 14; the Beldame is on Oct. 15. Through Oct. 16. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights, except Oct. 9, at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1.

CHAMPIONSHIPS—BASEBALL

Playoffs—The following games will be played, if necessary: the Toronto Blue Jays vs. the Oakland A's, Oct. 10-11; and the San Francisco Giants vs. the Chicago Cubs, Oct. 9 and Oct. 11-12.

World Series—The first four games are Oct. 14-15 and Oct. 17-18.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Coral Carvings—A collection of cameos and other carved jewelry that displays the virtuosity of the "maestri" of the Italian town Torre del Greco, who make nymphs, charms, and ornaments out of indigenous red coral, which in ancient times was reputed to come from Medusa's blood. (Fashion Institute of Technology, 227 W. 27th St. Oct. 10, from 10 to 8, and Oct. 11-12, from 9 to 5.)

Children's Museum of Manhattan—This brand-new institution (its preview for the public is Oct. 15, from 2 to 6) has created a Brainatarium, a multimedia exhibit—including a brain hologram and an animated film about dendrites and neurons—that endeavors to teach children about how their brains work. After their trip to the Brainatarium, children can play brain games on the mezzanine. (212 W. 83rd St.)

Upscale Garage Sales—The Lincoln Center branch of the New York Public Library has weeded through its collection of books, records, posters, and playbills and is getting rid of the dupes. (111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. Oct. 15 from 10:30 to 4. Admission at the door on the day of the sale.) . . . ¶ The Lighthouse Women's Committee sponsors its eighteenth annual "posh sale": used clothing from individuals and castoffs from department stores. (Lighthouse Auditorium, 110 E. 60th St. Oct. 16-20, from 10 to 6.)

Walks—On Oct. 15 at 11, Robert Venables will lead a tour of downtown Manhattan. Sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York. Meet at the north side of the Customs House at Bowling Green. . . . ¶ The Central Park rangers will lead walkers through crunchy leaf piles on Oct. 15 at 2. Meet at Central Park West and 72nd St. . . . ¶ The 92nd Street Y has arranged two walking tours that commemorate Sukkoth. The first, on Oct. 17, is of the Upper West Side; the second, on Oct. 18, is of Crown Heights. For tickets, call 996-1100.

Talks—At the Celeste Bartos Forum: Fred Friendly, of CBS fame, Oct. 16 at 6. . . . Jan Morris, travel writer and climber of Everest, Oct. 17 at 6. . . . Margaret Walker, poet-teacher-novelist, Oct. 18 at 6. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For information about tickets, call 930-0855.) . . . ¶ At the China Institute: Harrison Salisbury, on the events in Tiananmen Square, Oct. 17 at 6. (125 E. 65th St. For information about tickets, call 744-8181.)

Readings—Harold Brodkey, Colleen Dewhurst, Barbara Feldon, Elizabeth Hardwick, and Vivian Gornick will read excerpts from Anne Frank's diary. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. Oct. 13 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ Bharati Mukherjee and Mary Gordon read from new work. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Oct. 16 at 8.) . . . ¶ Allan Gurganus, Mona Simpson, and Susan Minot read from recent works. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Oct. 18 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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15	16	17	18			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 29.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (directed by Vincent Ward).

Theatre 2: "Shirley Valentine" (†).

Theatre 3: "Emma's Shadow" (Soeren Kragh-Jacobsen; in Danish).

Theatre 4: "Shell Shock" (Yoel Sharon).

Theatre 5: "Streetwise" (1985, Martin Bell), a documentary.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

"Pierrot le Fou" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo. (Closed Mondays.)

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey. From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Theatre 2: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

Theatre 3: "Johnny Handsome" (†).

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"Sea of Love" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Sea of Love" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "Shirley Valentine" (†). From Oct. 13: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (Woody Allen).

Theatre 3: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

Through Oct. 12: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson, JoBeth Williams, Sam Waterston, and Brian Keith.

From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

"An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"The Abyss" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson, JoBeth Williams, Sam Waterston, and Brian Keith. From Oct. 13: "Breaking In" (†).

Theatre 2: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "Parenthood" (†). From Oct. 13: "Sea of Love" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "Sea of Love" (†). From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 11: "The Girl in a Swing" (Gordon Hessler), with Meg Tilly and Rupert Frazer. From Oct. 12: "An Unremarkable Life" (Amin Q. Chaudhri), with Patricia Neal and Shelley Winters.

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 11: "Batman" (†). From Oct. 12: "The Girl in a Swing."

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "Casualties of War" (†). From Oct. 13: "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

Theatre 2: "Johnny Handsome" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

Theatre 2: "A Dry White Season" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Queen of Hearts" (Jon Amiel).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

Through Oct. 12: "Shirley Valentine" (†).

From Oct. 13: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (Woody Allen).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas, Andy Garcia, Ken Takakura, and Kate Capshaw.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†). From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)

Theatre 1: "Johnny Handsome" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Theatre 2: "Dead Poets Society" (†).

WEST SIDE

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (directed by Pedro Almodóvar, in Spanish), with Carmen Maura, Fernando Guillén, and Julieta Serrano.

Theatre 2: "The Music Teacher" (Gérard Corgiau; in French).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 2: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits.

Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

Quad Cinema, 54 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "The Second Animation Celebration: The Movie," twenty-four short films from six countries.

Theatre 2: "The Girl in a Swing" (Gordon Hessler), with Meg Tilly and Rupert Frazer.

Theatre 3: "Heavy Petting" (Obie Benz).

Theatre 4: "An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "Sea of Love" (†). From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Theatre 2: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey.

Theatre 3: "Johnny Handsome" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Oct. 12: "Parenthood" (†). From Oct. 13 (tentative): "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

Theatre 5: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 6: "Sea of Love" (†).

Theatre 7: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson, JoBeth Williams, Sam Waterston, and Brian Keith.

Theatre 8: "A Dry White Season" (†).

Theatre 9: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0600)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "The Abyss" (†). From Oct. 13 (tentative): "Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers" (Dominique Othenin-Girard).

Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Theatre 3: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy.

Worldwide Cinemas, 49th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson.

Theatre 2: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Theatre 3: Through Oct. 12: "Parenthood" (†). From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Oct. 12: "The Abyss" (†). From Oct. 13: "Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers" (Dominique Othenin-Girard).

Theatre 5: Through Oct. 12: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits. From Oct. 13: "Breaking In" (†).

Theatre 6: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Sea of Love" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"Romero" (John Duigan), with Raul Julia.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Thelonious Monk: Straight, No Chaser" (Charlotte Zwerin), a documentary.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Drugstore Cowboy" (Gun Van Sant, Jr.), with Matt Dillon and Kelly Lynch.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Weapons of the Spirit" (Pierre Sauvage), a documentary.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

Through Oct. 12: "Tom Jones" (†).

From Oct. 13: "Fight for Us" (Lino Brocka).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

Through Oct. 12: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Milo and Otis" (Masanori Hata); and (evenings only) "Do the Right Thing" (†).

From Oct. 13: "Parenthood" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Shirley Valentine" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "High Fidelity—The Adventures of the Guarneri String Quartet" (Allan Miller), a documentary. From Oct. 13: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Little Thief" (†).

Theatre 3: "Yaaba" (Idrissa Ouedraogo, in Moore).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†). From Oct. 13: "Story of Women" (Claude Chabrol; in French).

Theatre 2: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through Oct. 12: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "A Dry White Season" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey. From Oct. 13: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (Woody Allen).

Theatre 3: "Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas.

Theatre 4: "An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Theatre 5: Through Oct. 12: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†). From Oct. 13: "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

Theatre 6: "Johnny Handsome" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).

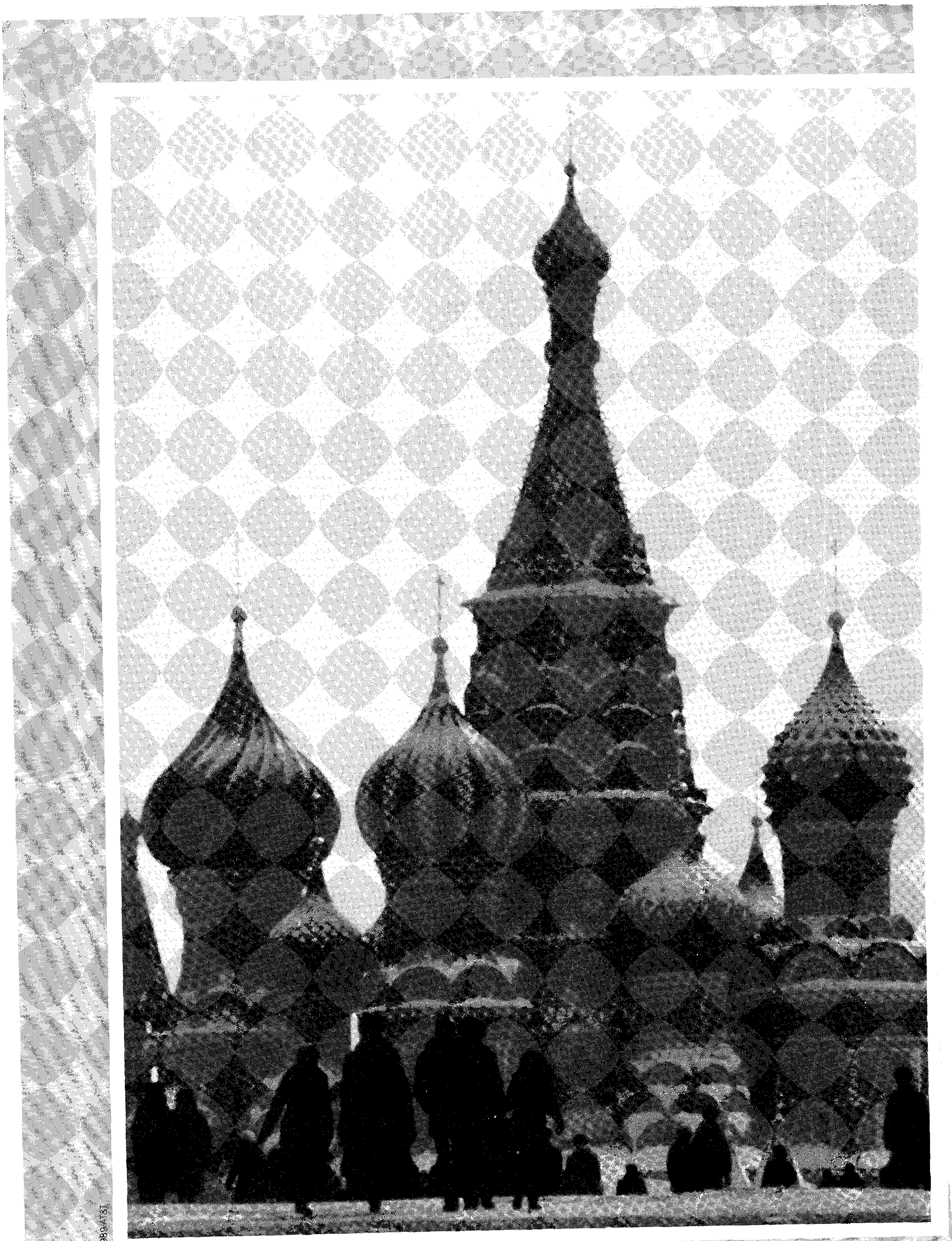
Theatre 2: "Sea of Love" (†).

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)

Through Oct. 12: "Batman" (†). From Oct. 13: To be announced.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with



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Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits.

Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy, Amy Madigan, Jean Kelly, Gaby Hoffman, and Macaulay Culkin. From Oct. 13: "Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers" (Dominique Othenin-Girard).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Johnny Handsome" (†).
Theatre 3: "Kickboxer" (directed by Mark DiSalle and David Worth), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 4: Through Oct. 12: "War Party" (Franc Roddam), with Billy Wirth and Kevin Dillon. From Oct. 13: "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.
Theatre 5: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham.
Theatre 6: "Blood Fist."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"An Innocent Man" (Peter Yates), with Tom Selleck and F. Murray Abraham.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†); and "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" (William Shatner), with Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 12: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks; and "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†). From Oct. 13: "Savage Beach."
Theatre 4: "The Package" (Andrew Davis), with Gene Hackman, Joanna Cassidy, Tommy Lee Jones, and John Heard.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Black Rain" (Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas, Andy Garcia, Ken Takakura, and Kate Capshaw.

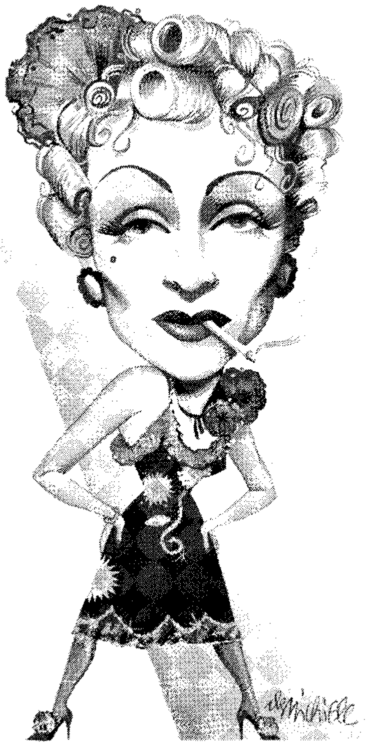
National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through Oct. 12: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits. From Oct. 13: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Oct. 12: "Parenthood" (†). From Oct. 13: "Halloween 5: The Revenge of Michael Myers" (Dominique Othenin-Girard).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through Oct. 12: "Welcome Home" (Franklin J. Schaffner), with Kris Kristofferson, JoBeth Williams, Sam Waterston, and Brian Keith.
From Oct. 13: "Old Gringo" (Luis Puenzo), with Jane Fonda, Gregory Peck, and Jimmy Smits.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
Theatre 2: "In Country" (Norman Jewison), with Bruce Willis, Emily Lloyd, Joan Allen, Kevin Anderson, and Judith Ivey.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582).
Oct. 9: "Humoresque" (1946, directed by Jean Negulesco), with Joan Crawford, John Garfield, Oscar Levant, Ruth Nelson, and J. Carroll Naish; and "Deception" (1946, Irving Rapper), with Bette Davis, Paul Henreid, and Claude Rains.
Oct. 10-11: "Madame Satan" (1930, Cecil B. De Mille), with Lillian Roth, Roland Young, and Reginald Denny; and "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor), with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, John Barrymore, Wallace Beery, Lionel Barrymore, Lee Tracy, Madge Evans, and Billie Burke.
Oct. 12: "The Tender Trap" (1955, Charles Walters), with Frank Sinatra, Debbie Reynolds, David Wayne, and Celeste Holm; and "This Could Be the Night" (1957, Robert Wise), with Jean Simmons, Paul Douglas, and Anthony Franciosa.
Oct. 13-14: "Ask Any Girl" (1959, Charles Walters), with Shirley MacLaine, David Niven, Gig Young, Rod Taylor, and Jim Backus; and "On the Town" (†).
Oct. 15-17: "Great Expectations" (1946, David Lean), with Valerie Hobson, John Mills, Martita Hunt, Finlay Currie, and Alec Guinness; and "Brief Encounter" (1946, Lean), with Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard.



Marlene Dietrich

James Stewart brought a drawling ease and sociability to the role of the strong, loquacious Western hero in "Destry Rides Again" (1939). Stewart's Destry—a lean, gentle lawman who won't use a gun until he's pushed to extremes—is also a talespinner who rarely trips over his own yarns. His rationality and backbone drive hard guys crazy. Set in a tough spot named Bottleneck, this superb, bare-knuckled comedy mixes brawling action and moral fables with slapstick, verbal wit, and sex appeal. Marlene Dietrich supplies much of the allure. As a saloon singer named Frenchy, the right-hand gal to Bottleneck's Mr. Big (Brian Donlevy), she envelops the movie in a hard-boiled je ne sais quoi. Although she's more down-to-earth than in, say, "Shanghai Express" (1932), she doesn't lose her trademark blend of erotic frankness and haughtiness.

Frenchy shares in the corruption of Bottleneck, but Destry is nonetheless captivated when she huskily croons "You've Got That Look" (one of three jaunty Frederick Hollander–Frank Loesser songs). Even if Frenchy and Destry never get amorous (she gives him one farewell kiss), Stewart and Dietrich play off each other with such grace and charm that this movie boasts the flirty delights of the best romantic comedies. It plays at Theatre 80 St. Marks on October 12, along with another Dietrich/cowboy vehicle, 1952's "Rancho Notorious," a "serious" Western that's one of director Fritz Lang's out-and-out duds. "Destry Rides Again," directed by Hollywood veteran George Marshall, is a vastly more entertaining movie, and even a far more adult Western.

From Oct. 18: "The Bridge on the River Kwai" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Oct. 10: "Imagine" (1988, Andrew Solt), a documentary; and "Yellow Submarine" (1968, George Dunning), a full-length animated cartoon of the Beatles.
Oct. 11-12: "Virgin Machine" (1989, Monika Treut; in German), with Ina Blum; and "She Must Be Seeing Things" (1988, Sheila McLaughlin), with Sheila Dabney.
Oct. 13-14: "40 Deuce" (1985, Paul Morrissey), with Kevin Bacon and Orson Bean; and "Midnight Cowboy" (1969, John Schlesinger), with Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight, Sylvia Miles, and Brenda Vaccaro.
Oct. 15: "Jules and Jim" (1962, François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre; and "The 400 Blows" (1959, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
Oct. 16-17: "9½ Weeks" (1986, Adrian Lyne), with Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger; and "Fatal Attraction" (†).
From Oct. 18: "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" (†) and "Maurice" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Through Oct. 10: "The Reckless Moment" (1949, Max Ophuls), with James Mason and Joan Bennett; "Fallen Angel" (1945, Otto Preminger), with Alice Faye, Dana Andrews, and Linda Darnell; and "Each Dawn I Die" (1939, William Keighley), with James Cagney and George Raft.
Oct. 11-12: "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948, Preston Sturges), with Rex Harrison, Linda Darnell, and Barbara Lawrence; and "A Letter to Three Wives" (1949, Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Linda Darnell, Jeanne Crain, Ann Sothern, Kirk Douglas, and Paul Douglas.
Oct. 13-14: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (1986, Stephen Frears), with Roshan Seth, Saeed Jaffrey, Gordon Warnecke, and Daniel Day Lewis; and "Gumshoe" (1972, Frears), with Albert Finney.
Oct. 15: "The Adversary" (1971, Satyajit Ray), with Dhritiman Chatterjee; and "Mahanagar" (†).
Oct. 16-17: "The Big Combo" (1955, Joseph H. Lewis), with Cornell Wilde, Jean Wallace, Richard Conte, and Brian Donlevy; "Deadline—U.S.A." (1952, Richard Brooks), with Humphrey Bogart, Kim Hunter, and Ethel Barrymore; and "He Walked by Night" (1949, Alfred Werker), with Richard Basehart and Scott Brady.
From Oct. 18: "Broadcast News" (1987, James L. Brooks), with William Hurt, Albert Brooks, Holly Hunter, Joan Cusack, Lois Chiles, Robert Prosky, and Jack Nicholson; and "Real Life" (1979, Albert Brooks), with Brooks and Charles Grodin.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Oct. 9: "Alphaville" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Eddie Constantine, Anna Karina, and Akim Tamiroff; and "Le Gai Savoir" (1968, Godard; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
Oct. 10: "Metropolis" (1926, Fritz Lang; silent), with Brigitte Helm; and "Spies" (1929, Lang).
Oct. 11: "In a Lonely Place" (1950, Nicholas Ray), with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame; and "Dead Reckoning" (1947, John Cromwell), with Bogart and Lizabeth Scott.
Oct. 12: "Rancho Notorious" (1952, Fritz Lang), with Marlene Dietrich, Arthur Kennedy, and Mel Ferrer; and "Destry Rides Again" (1939, George Marshall), with Dietrich, James Stewart, Una Merkel, and Brian Donlevy.
Oct. 13-14: "Butterfield 8" (1960, Daniel Mann), with Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Harvey, Eddie Fisher, and Dina Merrill; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.
Oct. 15: "The Blue Gardenia" (1953, Fritz Lang), with Anne Baxter, Richard Conte, and Ann Sothern; and "The Woman in the Window" (1944, Lang), with Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett, and Dan Duryea.
Oct. 16: "Les Enfants Terribles" ("The Strange Ones"; 1949, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French); and "The Emperor's Nightingale" (1951, Jiří Trnka), a Czech film played by a cast of puppets and a couple of genuine actors, narrated by Boris Karloff.
Oct. 17: "Dark Passage" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren

Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Bogart, Bacall, and Walter Brennan.

Oct. 18: "The Good Earth" (†); and "The Toy Wife" (1938, Richard Thorpe), with Luise Rainer, Melvyn Douglas, and Robert Young.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

THEATRE 1: Oct. 9 at 2: "It Happened One Night" (1934, directed by Frank Capra), with Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert, Walter Connolly, Roscoe Karns, Alan Hale, Ward Bond, and Jameson Thomas. . . . ¶ Oct. 9 at 5: "The General" (1927, Buster Keaton and Clyde Bruckman; silent), with Keaton and Marion Mack. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 3 and 6: "Fight for Us" (1989, Lino Brocka), a documentary. . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 2:30: "Life Classes" (1987, William D. MacGillivray; a Canadian film), with Jacinta Cormier. . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 6: "The Heat Line" (1988, Hubert-Yves Rose; a Canadian film, in French), with Gabriel Arcand. . . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 2: "Tadpole and the Whale" (1988, Jean-Claude Lord; a Canadian film), with Fanny Lauzier. . . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 5: "A Life" (1988, Frank Cole; a Canadian film), with Anne Miquet. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 2: "Tadpole and the Whale." . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 5: "Sitting in Limbo" (1986, John N. Smith; a Canadian film), with Pat Dillon. . . . ¶ Oct. 16 at 2:30: "The Heat Line." . . . ¶ Oct. 16 at 6: "Life Classes." . . . ¶ Oct. 17 at 2:30: "Sitting in Limbo." . . . ¶ Oct. 17 at 6: "Horses in Winter" (1988, Rick Baxlen and Patrick Vallely; a Canadian film), with Jacob Tierney.

THEATRE 2: Oct. 9 at 2 and 5: Animated films from the Cinémathèque Québecoise. . . . ¶ Oct. 10 at 3 and 6: "Laughter" (1930, Harry d'Abbadie d'Arrast), with Nancy Carroll, Fredric March, Frank Morgan, Glen Anders, and Diane Ellis. Cinematography by George Folsey. . . . ¶ Oct. 16 at 6:30: Five short films by David Rimmer, who will be present.

MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," a chance to see the television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty or so years. Oct. 10-14: Thornton Wilder's "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" (1958, CBS), with Hume Cronyn, Judith Anderson, Viveca Lindfors, Eva Le Gallienne, and Theodore Bikel. . . . From Oct. 17: Eudora Welty's "The Wide Net" (1987, PBS), with Barry Tubb, Kyra Sedgwick, Tim Ransom, and Joseph Sommer. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ "Twenty Years of Monty Python." Oct. 10-14: "At Last the 1958 Show" (1967), with John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Marty Feldman, and Tim Brooke-Taylor; and "Do Not Adjust Your Set" (1968), with Terry Jones, Michael Palin, and Eric Idle. . . . From Oct. 17: Episodes 1-5 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus," with Chapman, Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Idle, Jones, and Palin. Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—In the **RIKLIS THEATRE,** "A Hand-Made World: Sixty Years of Animated Features." Oct. 11 at 2:30: "Watership Down" (1978). . . . Oct. 12 at 2:30: "Animal Farm" (1954). . . . Oct. 13 at 2:30: "Charlotte's Web" (1973). . . . ¶ In the **RIKLIS THEATRE,** films on which Tony Walton worked as costume or production designer. Oct. 14 at 2: "Murder on the Orient Express" (1974, Sidney Lumet), with Albert Finney, Ingrid Bergman, Lauren Bacall, Sean Connery, Wendy Hiller, Vanessa Redgrave, Michael York, Martin Balsam, Richard Widmark, Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Cassel, and Rachel Roberts. . . . Oct. 14 at 5: "Prince of the City" (1980, Lumet), with Treat Williams and Jerry Orbach. . . . Oct. 15 at 2: "Mary Poppins" (1964, Robert Stevenson), with Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. . . . Oct. 15 at 5: "Petulia" (1968, Richard Lester), with Julie Christie, George C. Scott, and Richard Chamberlain. . . . Oct. 18 at 2:30: "Murder on the Orient Express." . . . ¶ In the **WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SCREENING ROOM,** "The Rise and Fall of the Television Western," a survey of this genre, 1943-73, shown in eleven three-hour thematic programs ("Minorities and the Western," "The Classic Adult Western," and "The Warner Bros. Western" are a few of the groupings). Showings Wednesdays through Fridays at 7:30 and Saturdays and Sundays at 11:30 and 2:35.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. Oct 11 at 8: Seven short films by Robert Breer. . . . ¶ Oct. 11 at 9:30: "Street Scene" (1931, King Vidor), with Sylvia Sidney, William Collier, Jr., and Estelle Taylor. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 8: Films by David Rimmer, Jim Anderson, Rick Hancox, and Raphael Bendahan. . . . ¶ Oct. 12 at 9:30: "Tabu" (1931, F. W. Murnau). . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 8: Films by Joyce Wieland, Jack Chambers, and Michael Snow. . . . ¶ Oct. 13 at 9:30: "Comedies Lurk" (1964), "Money" (1968), and "Tarzan" (1969), all by Rudy Burckhardt. . . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 8: "Pankow '95" (Gabor Altorjay; in Hungarian). . . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 10:30: Five short films by Burckhardt. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 8: Eleven short films by Bob Fleischner. . . . ¶ Oct. 15 at 9:30: "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940, John Ford), with Henry Fonda, Jane Darwell, John Carradine, Charley Grapewin, and Dorris Bowdon. . . . ¶ Oct. 18 at 6 and 8:30: "An American Tragedy" (1931, Josef von Sternberg), with Phillips Holmes, Sylvia Sidney, and Frances Dee. . . . ¶ Oct. 18 at 8: "Dog Star Man" (1964, Stan Brakhage).

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"Eye for I: Video Self-Portraits," fourteen videotapes (made since 1972) by seven American artists, shown in four different programs. The exhibition was organized by the French film theoretician Raymond Bellour, who will be present Oct. 10 at 6:30. Showings Tuesdays at 2 and 4:30 (Oct. 10 at 4), Wednesdays through Saturdays at 11:30 and 1:30, and Sundays at 12:30 and 2:30.

JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Oct. 13 at 6:30: "The Political Game" (1989, James Miki; in Japanese).

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. (570-3949)—Oct. 10 at 8: "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" (1969, George Roy Hill), with Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and Katharine Ross. Mr. Redford and Mr. Hill will be present. . . . ¶ Oct. 17 at 8: "The Great Waldo Pepper" (1975, Hill), with Redford, Bo Svenson, Bo Brundin, Susan Sarandon, and Geoffrey Lewis. The screenwriter, William Goldman, will be present.

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, JR., STATE OFFICE BUILDING, Art Gallery, 163 W. 125th St. (749-5298)—Oct. 13 at 2 and 5: "Baby Laurence: Jazz Hoofer" (Bill Hancock), "Sippie: Sippie Wallace" (Michelle Payman and Roberta Grossman), "Blues Like Showers of Rain: Lightnin' Hopkins" (John Heremy), and "A Brother with Perfect Timing" (Chris Austin). . . . ¶ Oct. 14 at 2, 4:30, and 7: "Eubie!" (1979, Julianne Boyd), "Big City Blues" (St. Claire Bourne), and "Baby Laurence: Jazz Hoofer."

FRENCH INSTITUTE–ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—Oct. 11 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Le Bal" (1983, Ettore Scola; no dialogue). . . . ¶ Oct. 18 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" (1987, Eric Rohmer; in French), with Emmanuelle Chaulet, Sophie Renoir, Eric Viellard, and François-Eric Gendron.

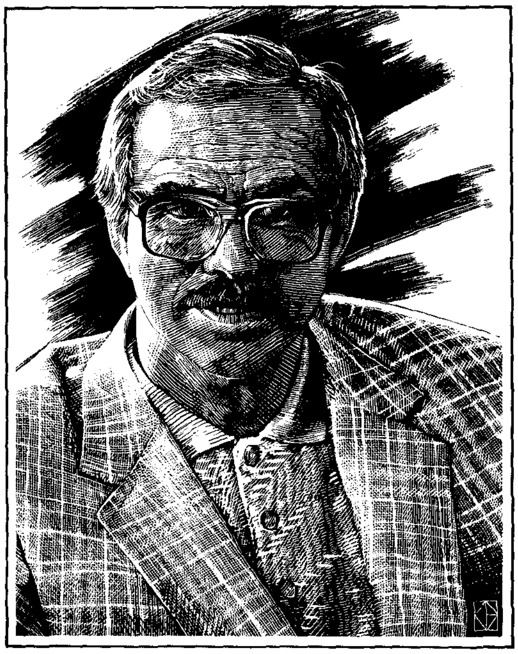
IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

THE ABYSS—This undersea epic is more complex technically than the previous films written and directed by James Cameron—"The Terminator" and "Aliens"—and, disastrously, it aims for emotional complexity as well. The main characters are an estranged married couple (Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) who are forced to work together in an emergency salvage operation—searching the depths for a nuclear submarine that met with a mysterious accident. Cameron wants to turn this routine plot into a metaphor for the couple's attempt to salvage their relationship. Although that isn't a very subtle idea, he might have managed to put it over if he had concentrated on the action and let the meanings take care of themselves. But the action sequences are confusingly edited, the dialogue is painfully explicit, and the B-movie suspense devices he uses tend to violate the integrity of the metaphor. The big message is, You have to touch bottom—way, way down there—before you can see the light. Michael Biehn plays the villain.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/4/89.) (Gotham Cinema. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas; through Oct. 12.)



Burt Reynolds in "Breaking In"

BATMAN—Tim Burton's powerfully glamorous comic-book epic, with sets angled and lighted like film noir, goes beyond pulp. It has a funky, nihilistic charge, and an eerie, poetic intensity. Michael Keaton is the fabulously wealthy Bruce Wayne, who patrols the sinister nighttime canyons of Gotham City in the guise of Batman, and Jack Nicholson is the sniggering mobster Jack Napier, who turns into the leering madman the Joker. The two are fighting for the soul of the city that spawned them. The movie is underwritten, but it has so many unpredictable spins that what's missing doesn't seem to matter much. It's mean and anarchic and blissful. Written by Sam Hamm, Warren Skaaren (and uncredited others), based on characters created by Bob Kane. With cinematography by Roger Pratt; design by Anton Furst; costumes by Bob Ringwood; a plangent score by Danny Elfman; and songs by Prince. The cast includes Jack Palance, Kim Basinger, Jerry Hall, and Robert Wuhl.—P.K. (7/10/89) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue; through Oct. 11. . . . ¶ Columbia Cinema; through Oct. 12.)

BREAKING IN—With Burt Reynolds and Casey Siemaszko, directed by Bill Forsyth. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Twin, and Worldwide Cinemas; starting Oct. 13.)

THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI (1957)—David Lean's big and engrossing Academy Award winner, adapted from Pierre Boulle's novel about prisoners of war held in Burma by the Japanese. The film is rather misshapen, particularly in the sections featuring William Holden, and the

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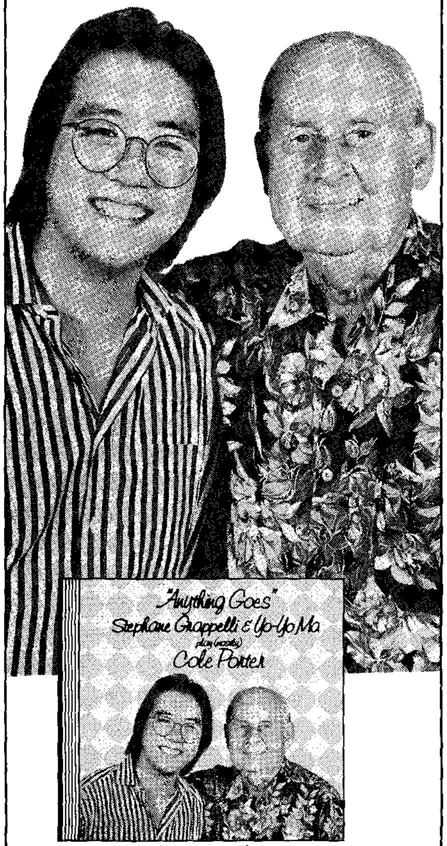

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action that detonates the explosive finish isn't quite clear. However, Alec Guinness is compelling as the English Colonel Nicholson, a stickler for rules who courageously defies the Japanese by legalistic means, and then goes haywire and restores morale among the men in the prison camp by putting them to work building a bridge for their captors—a bridge that will enable the Japanese to bring up troop reinforcements. With Sessue Hayakawa, Jack Hawkins, James Donald, André Morell, and Geoffrey Horne. The screenplay was by Boulle, with the uncredited collaboration of the blacklisted Carl Foreman and Michael Wilson. Filmed in Ceylon.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; starting Oct. 18.)

Casualties of War—A great, intense movie about war and rape, based on a Vietnam incident of 1966 that was reported in this magazine (October 18, 1969) by the late Daniel Lang. He gave an emotionally devastating account of the actions of a squad of five American soldiers who kidnapped a Vietnamese village girl, raped her, and then covered up their crime by killing her. One of the five men refused to take part in the rape, and despite threats and attempts on his life, forced the Army to bring the other four to trial. He's the one who suffers from guilt: he can't forgive himself for his inability to save the girl's life. Directed by Brian De Palma, the movie has the purity of films such as "Grand Illusion" and "Shoeshine"; it's the culmination of his best work. Sean Penn gives a daring performance as the squad's twenty-year-old leader; Michael J. Fox is impressive as the soldier who can't keep quiet; Thuy Thu Le is the dazed, battered girl who haunts the movie long before she's dead. The adaptation (too explicit in a few places) is by David Rabe; the music is by Ennio Morricone.—P.K. (8/21/89) (Gemini; through Oct. 12.)

Dead Poets Society—Robin Williams gives an astonishingly empathic performance as an eager, dedicated prep-school teacher in the late fifties. This teacher talks to his boys about the passions expressed in poetry and helps them release their creative impulses. But one of the boys, soaring on his new confidence, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father, and makes a disastrous choice. Directed by Peter Weir, from a script by Thomas Schulman, the picture draws out the obvious and turns itself into a classic. Weir, it appears, is more interested in the elegiac than in the dramatic. Like his "Gallipoli," this film has a gold ribbon attached to it. With Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Josh Charles, Gale Hansen, and Kurtwood Smith and Norman Lloyd.—P.K. (6/26/89) (86th Street East Twin, and Guild.)

Do the Right Thing—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. And, although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence; he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (7/24/89) (23rd St. West Triplex. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; through Oct. 12, evenings only.)

A Dry White Season—In Johannesburg, a naïve white schoolmaster (Donald Sutherland) has his eyes opened to the police brutality involved in the death of his black gardener, and imagines he can obtain justice for the man's family. Marlon Brando is airily light and masterly as the veteran anti-apartheid barrister who takes the case even though he knows that he can't get anywhere with the rigged court. The romantic in Brando must have responded to the old rebel's romantic gesture: he saves the picture for the (short) time he's onscreen. But the director, Euzhan Palcy, seems lost; her work is heavy-handed, and the script (by Colin Welland and the director, from a novel by André Brink) is earnest and didactic. Performers such as Susan Sarandon, Jurgen Prochnow, Winston Ntshona, Janet Suzman, Michael Gambon, and Zakes Mokae sink into the obviousness of their roles and leave no trace. (Poor, uninspired, virtuous Sutherland is out of it; his characterization is one long whimper.)—P.K. (10/2/89) (Loews New York Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Fabulous Baker Boys—With Jeff Bridges, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Beau Bridges; directed by Steve Kloves. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 34th St. East, Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin; starting Oct. 13.)

Fatal Attraction (1987)—A primer on the bad things that can happen if a man cheats on his wife. There's sometimes a fine line between sexiness and craziness, and the hero (Michael Douglas), a Manhattan corporate lawyer—a settled married man—isn't hip enough to catch the danger signals when he lets a woman book editor (Glenn Close) talk him into going with her to her loft. Once this woman begins behaving as if she had a right to a share in the lawyer's life, she becomes the dreaded lunatic of horror movies. But with a difference; she parrots the aggressively angry, self-righteous statements that have become commonplaces of feminist fiction, and they're so inappropriate to the circumstances that they're the proof she's loco. They're also the director Adrian Lyne's and the screenwriter James Dearden's hostile version of feminism. The film is about men seeing feminists as witches, and, the way the facts are presented here, the woman *is* a witch. Brandishing a kitchen knife, she terrorizes the lawyer and his family. Basically, this is a gross-out slasher movie in a glossy format. The picture enforces conventional morality (in the era of AIDS) by piling on paranoiac fear. With Anne Archer, Ellen Hamilton Latzen, and Stuart Pankin—P.K. (Cinema Village; Oct. 16-17.)

The Good Earth (1937)—Having purchased Pearl S. Buck's prestigious Chinese-family saga, M-G-M sent an expedition to China which brought back two million feet of atmospheric shots and eighteen tons of costumes, native animals, dismantled farmhouses, and a village shrine. Then five hundred California acres were landscaped and terraced to simulate a Chinese farm, locusts were rented for a scourge, and Occidentals were chosen for the leads, with Orientals in the supporting roles, and as the babies. Luise Rainer, who had taken an Academy Award for her Anna Held in "The Great Ziegfeld," won another for her monotonous yet affecting performance as the stoic O-Lan, the wife of the peasant Wang (Paul Muni); during the looting of a manor house, she picks up the jewels that raise her family out of starvation into prosperity. But, spoiled by wealth, Wang loses contact with the good earth; he becomes infatuated with Lotus, the dancer (Tilly Losch, who does a lot of finger twirling), and takes her as his second wife, and his lust almost destroys the family. The locust plague brings him to his senses. It's a melodramatic sermon—a glorification of the passive, selfless, suffering mother, O-Lan. (There isn't a shred of sympathy for Lotus, who is bought and sold.) The film domesticates exoticism: it's as predictable as an Andy Hardy picture, but much more sober, and much, much longer. The script, by Talbot Jennings, Tess Slesinger, and Claudine West, was partly based on a stage version by Owen and Donald Davis. The first director, George Hill, who had supervised shooting the background footage in China, committed suicide, and the project was taken over by Sidney Franklin, who directed with his usual lack of imagination, individuality, style. He was the M-G-M heavyweight champ. The cinematographer was the great Karl Freund. In sepia.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 18.)

Ioney, I Shrunk the Kids!—A contraption invented by a suburban nerd scientist (Rick Moranis) cuts both his kids and the neighbors' down to size: a quarter of an inch. Unaware of what has happened, and unable to hear their pipsqueak cries, Dad sweeps them into a dustpan, dumps them in a garbage bag, and hauls the bag out to the curb. The kids have to make their way back to the house across the (not very recently mowed) lawn—a long trek for tiny, tiny legs. There are adventures, of course, engineered by the sort of special-effects "magic" that probably even the youngest audiences have learned by now to dread. The real surprise of this movie—which was directed by Joe Johnston, an effects specialist from Industrial Light & Magic, and which carries an immense list of technical credits (including a "Scorpion Crew," a "Bee Sequence Crew," and a "Stop Motion Ant Crew")—is that it's friendly, good-humored, and unpretentious. Johnston manages to scale down not only the kids but also the movie's sense of its own importance. Also with Matt Frewer, Marcia Strassman, and Kristine Sutherland; Jared Rushton, Amy O'Neill, Thomas Brown, and Robert Oliveri are the kids. The imaginative cinematography is by Hiro Narita.—T.R. (Eastside Cinema. . . . ¶ Embassy; through Oct. 12.)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade—This mediocre third film in the Indiana Jones trilogy—a reprise of the first, "Raiders of the Lost Ark"—is a mixture of cliffhanger and anti-Nazi thriller and religious spectacle. It's enjoyable, but familiar, and the action lacks the exhilarating, leaping precision that the director, Steven Spielberg, is famous for. The only real spin is in the slapstick teamwork of Harrison Ford, as the archeologist-adventurer Indy, and Sean Connery, as Indy's father, a medievalist who's too engrossed in his studies to pay much attention to his daredevil son's triumphs. With River Phoenix playing Indy as a boy, Alison Doody, Denholm Elliott, John Rhys-Davies, and Julian Glover. The screenplay, by Jeffrey Boam, is based on a story devised by the producer George Lucas and Menno Meyjes.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Embassy.)

Johnny Handsome—With Mickey Rourke, directed by Walter Hill. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Loews Orpheum, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Lethal Weapon 2—Chases, explosions, fights, barrages of insults, the odd moment of manly sentimentality—these are the standard elements of American action movies in the eighties, and the "Lethal Weapon" movies use them with an amazing lack of shame. There's lots of comedy, but no real relief: the punch lines slam into our brains like cars into plate-glass windows. The only thing that makes this movie at all distinctive is its hero, a reckless L.A. cop named Riggs, a role that allows Mel Gibson to zip through the picture like a free electron. Riggs isn't actually trying to kill himself this time (as he was in the first movie), but he's still a wild man and Gibson is still having a great time playing him. It's a mischievous, sprightly performance: he treats the action sequences as if they were slapstick routines. (Unfortunately, the director, Richard Donner, doesn't have as light a touch.) Danny Glover plays his partner, Murtaugh, an easygoing, conservative black family man; he's mostly called upon to react with horror to Riggs' dangerous antics, and the joke of their relationship gets a little tiresome. (The effect, sometimes, is of a white guy doing heroic stuff while his black pal shuffles along beside him. Glover, a good actor, deserves better.) Joe Pesci does small wonders with his supporting role as a ferrety, motor-mouthed money launderer, and Joss Ackland glowers like Alastair Sim as the head villain, a South African diplomat who smuggles drugs.—T.R. (West Side Cinema. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Oct. 12.)

The Little Thief—Claude Miller's movie, set in the early fifties, is about a rebellious provincial teen-ager named Janine (Charlotte Gainsbourg). The screenplay (by Miller, his wife, Annie, and Luc Béraud) is based on an original story by François Truffaut and Claude de Givray; Truffaut himself reportedly planned to direct a film of the story. This movie bears recognizable traces of the late New Wave director: it's gentle-natured and sympathetic to the young, and its structure is casual and anecdotal, like the Doinel mov-

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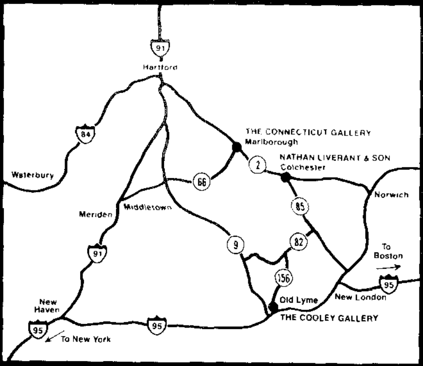

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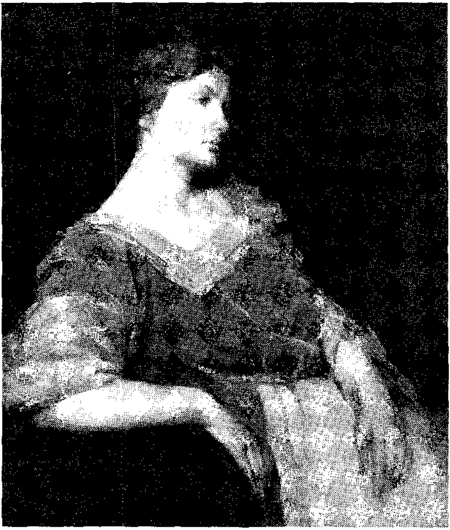

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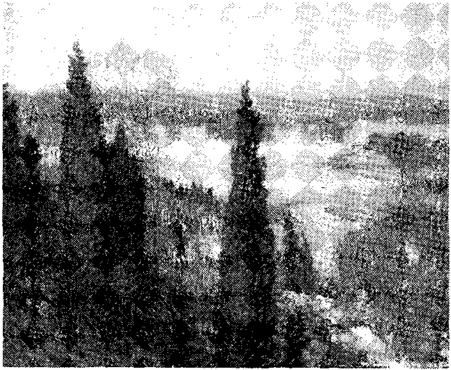

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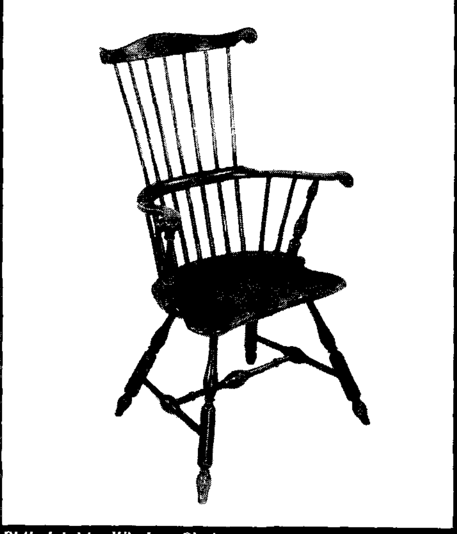

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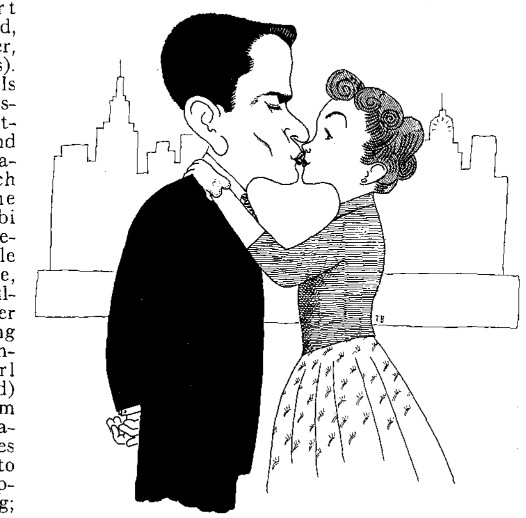
ies. What it lacks is Truffaut's energy. Miller is a perfectly decent craftsman, and the movie is never unwatchable, but nothing drives it forward from one scene to the next, and Janine's lucklessness and her tough-kid spirit don't resonate as Antoine's do. For Truffaut, the story wasn't the most important thing; its' all that's left of him in "The Little Thief." Also with Didier Bezace, Simon de la Brosse, and Nathalie Cardone. In French.—*T.R. (9/4/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)*

Mahanagar (1963; "The Big City")—The city is Calcutta, and Satyajit Ray's heroine, a young married woman, takes a job in order to supplement her husband's income (which must support them, their child, his teen-age sister, and his parents). The movie deals with the wife's discovery of life outside the home, and her changed relations with each member of the family. Madhabi Mukherjee is lovely as the gentle but strong wife, and there are telling portraits of her cruddy, hustling boss, and of an Anglo-Indian girl (Vicky Redwood) who is the victim of his discrimination. The film does what it sets out to do, and it's perceptive and revealing; it stays with one. Yet it is very quiet and rather thin; it lacks the depths and richness and creative imagery of the best of Satyajit Ray. In Bengali and English.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Oct. 15.)



At the Biograph, Frank Sinatra and Debbie Reynolds in "The Tender Trap"

Maurice (1987)—The director, James Ivory, painstakingly reproduces the limp, drawn-out construction of E. M. Forster's novel, written in 1913 and 1914, but not published until 1971, a year after his death. It's about a young man's struggle to come to terms with his homosexuality. Forster wants to show that homosexuality is natural, and so Maurice (pronounced Morris) is an average Edwardian stockbroker who lives in the suburbs —a proper hale-and-hearty fellow, narrow-minded and snobbish, like others of his (middle) class. And then Forster tries to demonstrate that Maurice's full physical commitment to his homosexual drives is his redemption—that it burns away his snobbery and turns him into a more perceptive man, a better man. The trap for both the novel and the film is Maurice's blandness; the actor who plays him—tall, blond James Wilby—comes across as passive and slow. (You'd think being a gay man was tantamount to being retarded.) Ivory has a fine, trained eye for light and composition, but when it comes to capturing the feel of repression and of bursting desire he isn't there. The movie is suffocatingly discreet, with classical music in the clinches. Hugh Grant plays Maurice's upper-class Cambridge friend Clive Durham, with whom he experiences three years of platonic frustration, and Rupert Graves is Durham's under-gamekeeper Scudder, with whom Maurice finally experiences physical love. The screenplay is by Kit Hesketh-Harvey and Ivory; cinematography by Pierre Lhomme.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting Oct. 18.)

On the Town (1949)—This musical about three sailors with twenty-four hours leave in New York has an undeserved high reputation. Yes, Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Betty Garrett, Ann Miller, Jules Munshin, Vera-Ellen (as Miss Subways), Florence Bates, Tom Dugan, and Alice Pearce are all in it, and it's the Comden and Green musical with the remnants of the Bernstein score. But its exuberant love of New York seems forced, and most of the numbers are hearty and uninspired. Kelly and Stanley Donen choreographed and directed.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Oct. 13-14.)

Parenthood—The script, by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is ambitiously constructed, tracing the relationships of several boomer-age parents with their kids, their siblings, and their own parents. The advantage of this arrangement is that none of the characters are onscreen very long: we have time to get sick of only about half of them, and some—especially the nervous, eager dad played by Steve Martin—are fun to watch. The drawback is that the movie has no drive. The dull title captures the tone precisely: the whole thing has been conceived generically, abstractly, and by the end the director, Ron Howard, is rushing from scene to scene tidying up loose ends, to make sure that each little individual drama gets its point across and that they all add up to a correct answer to the essay question "What is parenthood?" The movie tries very hard, but its wisdom is on the forlorn side. Also with Mary Steenburgen, Rick Moranis, Dianne Wiest, Jason Robards, Harley Kozak, Martha Plimpton, Keanu Reeves, and Tom Hulce.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Baronet, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and National Twin; through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; starting Oct. 13.)

Sammy and Rosie Get Laid (1987)—This second film by the director Stephen Frears and the writer Hanif Kureishi, who made "My Beautiful Laundrette," has so much going on that it keeps losing track of what it's about. Sammy (Ayub Khan Din) and Rosie (Frances Barber) and their friends are Third World bohemians who live in a decaying, racially mixed part of London. Sammy's father, Rafi (Shashi Kapoor), who was a minister in the repressive government of Pakistan and is fleeing threats on his life, thinks he can return to the courteous, law-abiding England he remembers from thirty years before. He comes from the airport straight into a race riot—the movie is his nightmare experience of the new London. Houses and cars have been set on fire and we are supposed to see the flames as a destructive-creative element. What we see is an apocalyptic carnival that's like street theatre. At times, it's as if Swinging London had come back as a race riot. Made in a documentary manner as stylized as a Hollywood musical, the movie is hyperconscious of art, of politics, of itself, and at times it's exasperatingly affectless. At its best, it's playfully Godardian, as in the sequence with the screen split horizontally and three multiracial couples stretched out on top of each other, and the Ghetto Lites singing a reggae version of "My Girl." There are two marvellous performances: by Kapoor, and by Claire Bloom, as a woman he deserted long ago. Wendy Gazelle is likable as an American photographer; Roland Gift (of Fine Young Cannibals) is dimply. (11/16/87)—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting Oct. 18.)

Sea of Love—This romantic thriller, written by Richard Price and directed by Harold Becker, has a simple and rather familiar story: a cop (Al Pacino) investigating a series of murders falls in love with one of the suspects. But the movie isn't entirely predictable; it provides plenty of surprises, odd little riffs that keep us alert. And Pacino is amazing. He's playing a middle-aged, divorced, depressed, semi-alcoholic man who exposes himself to great peril by conducting an affair with a young woman who might be a killer. The actor's face has a saggy, disappointed look now, but there's something hopeful, a wary avidity, in his eyes. In this role, he seems to be startling himself with his own vitality. Barkin is perfectly cast as an ambiguous object of desire; she can look very soft or very, very hard, and the camera doesn't know quite what to make of her. It's a consistently entertaining movie, although Becker's direction has a tendency to flatten the highs in the material. (And Price's script, full of sharp dialogue and smart ideas, nevertheless has a few characteristic lapses—most damagingly, a slackening of inspiration toward the end.) Also with John Goodman (in good form, as the hero's partner), William Hickey, Richard Jenkins, Christine Estabrook, and Michael Rooker. (The title song, a pop ballad first recorded by Phil Phillips in 1959, is played throughout the movie, and it works beautifully.)—T.R. (9/18/89) (Bijou Cinema, Bay Cinema, Loews Orpheum, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Metro Cinema. . . . ¶ Coronet; through Oct. 12. . . . ¶ Baronet; starting Oct. 13.)

Sex, Lies, and Videotape—Steven Soderbergh's smooth, handsome first feature generates a fair degree of psychological tension out of next to nothing. It's a triangle drama with a cunning little kink in it. The triangle consists of Ann (Andie MacDowell), a beautiful young Southern woman who has "never really been that much into sex"; her husband, John (Peter Gallagher), a sleazy yuppie lawyer; and her younger sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo), who's sleeping with John. The kink is an old college pal of John's, named Graham (James Spader), a soft-spoken drifter who comes to town and changes everybody's life. Graham has sworn off sex, because, he says, it's the only way for him to stay honest: he's impotent, except when he's watching one of his dozens of home videos—all of them interviews he has conducted with women about sex. He's like a retired gunslinger, a laconic hombre who won't pull his artillery out of its holster because he's seen too much killin' already. This is "Shane" remade as a Southern psychodrama. But there's some real conviction in it—a mixed-up fervor that keeps us watching.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Plaza, Waverly, and Cinema Studio. . . . ¶ Lincoln Plaza; starting Oct. 13.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell, who wrote the play (and the movie) "Educating Rita," gives us another Englishwoman learning a thing or two about life. This time, it's a housewife in her forties whose kids are grown and gone and whose husband is so unresponsive that she spends a lot of time talking to the kitchen wall. A friend persuades her to come along on a two-week holiday in Greece, and Shirley, away from her dull husband and her constricted life, starts to enjoy herself for the first time since her adolescence. But she's not just having a fling or reliving her giddy youth—the writer wants us to understand that she's experiencing deeper, maturer pleasures. Russell's script is an adaptation of his play, which was a monologue. Though this isn't a one-woman show anymore, it's still a showcase for perky, round-faced Pauline Collins. She's very likable, and her performance is mercifully restrained. Lewis Gilbert's direction is long on maturity and short on pleasure: the picture moves at a careful, measured, guided-tour pace. By the end, poor Shirley seems more than ever like a lost soul: an Edna O'Brien character who woke up and found herself on "The Love Boat." Also with Tom Conti.—T.R. (9/4/89) (Angelika Film Center, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews Tower East; through Oct.12.)

Tom Jones (1963)—Tony Richardson whizzes through the Fielding novel, pausing for a marvellous, lewd eating scene. With Albert Finney, Hugh Griffith, Edith Evans, George Devine, Joan Greenwood, Diane Cilento, Joyce Redman, and many others. The script is by John Osborne.—P.K. (Paris; through Oct. 12.)

When Harry Met Sally . . .—Rob Reiner's movie, from a script by Nora Ephron, takes a screwball-comedy idea and inflates it like a rubber raft. Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan) meet in the late seventies, rub each other the wrong way, and then, after breaking up with their partners, become close friends; all the while, they're conducting a running debate on the question "Can a man and a woman ever be just friends, without sex getting in the way?" It's a Rohmer movie played as a sitcom. Crystal muddles through amiably, but Ryan flounders: the filmmakers give her impossible, unplayable scenes, and all she can do is be adorable. The movie keeps telling us that it's real and truthful and universal. Everything in it seems false. Also with Carrie Fisher and Bruno Kirby.—T.R. (8/7/89) (59th Street East Cinema, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Regency; through Oct. 12.)

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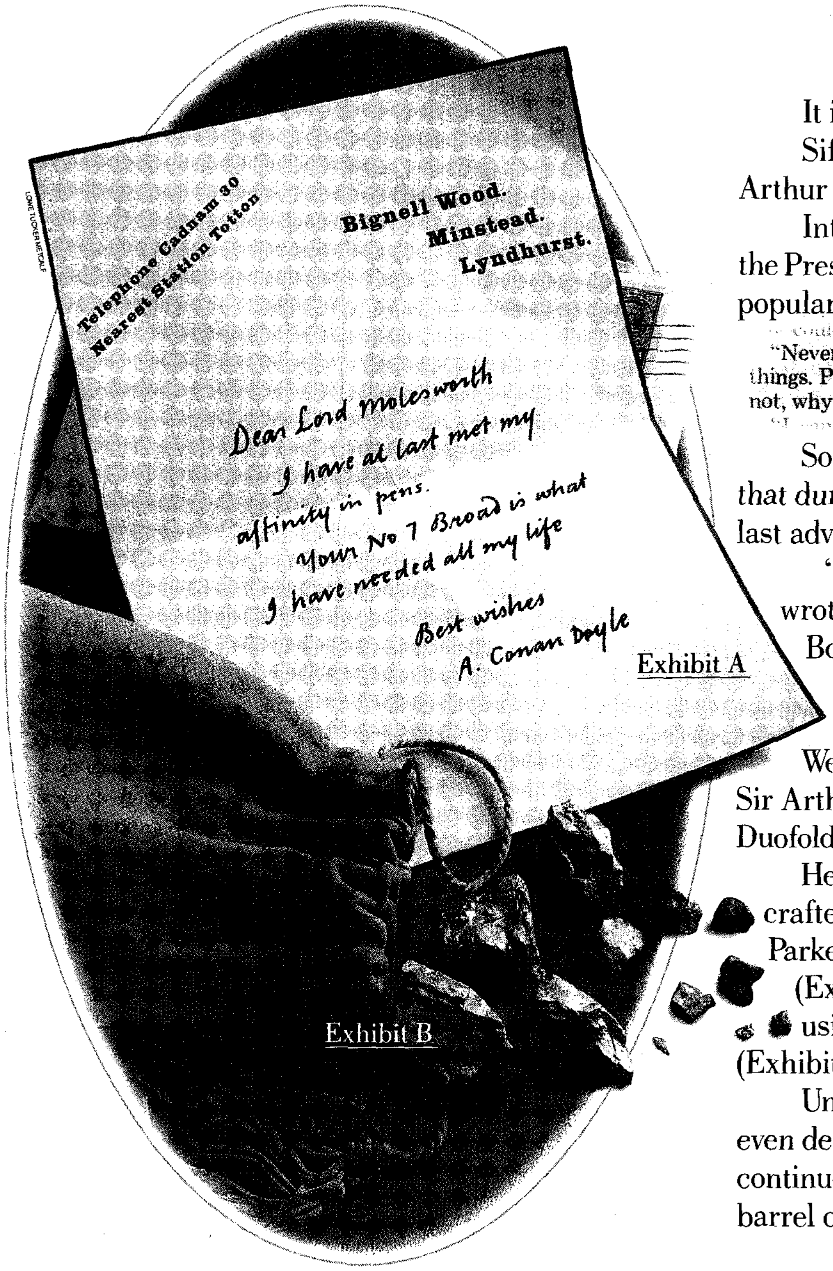

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Exhibit A

Exhibit B

LOWE TUCKER METCALF

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Introduced in 1921, the Parker Duofold (“Writ the Pressureless Way”) quickly became by far the m popular pen of its time.

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> **“Never mind,” said Holmes, laughing; “it is my business to kn things. Perhaps I have trained myself to see what others overlook. not, why should you come to consult me?”** *“A Case of Identity”*
>
> “I came to you, sir, because I heard of you from

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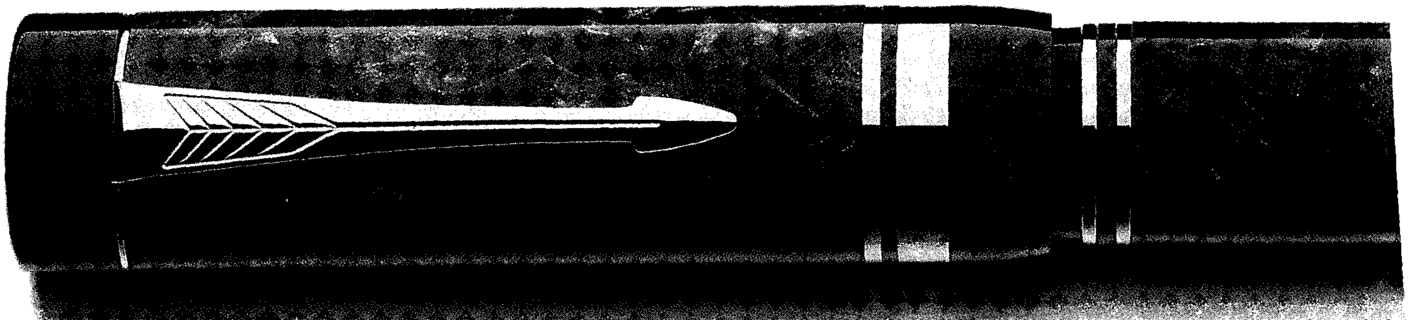
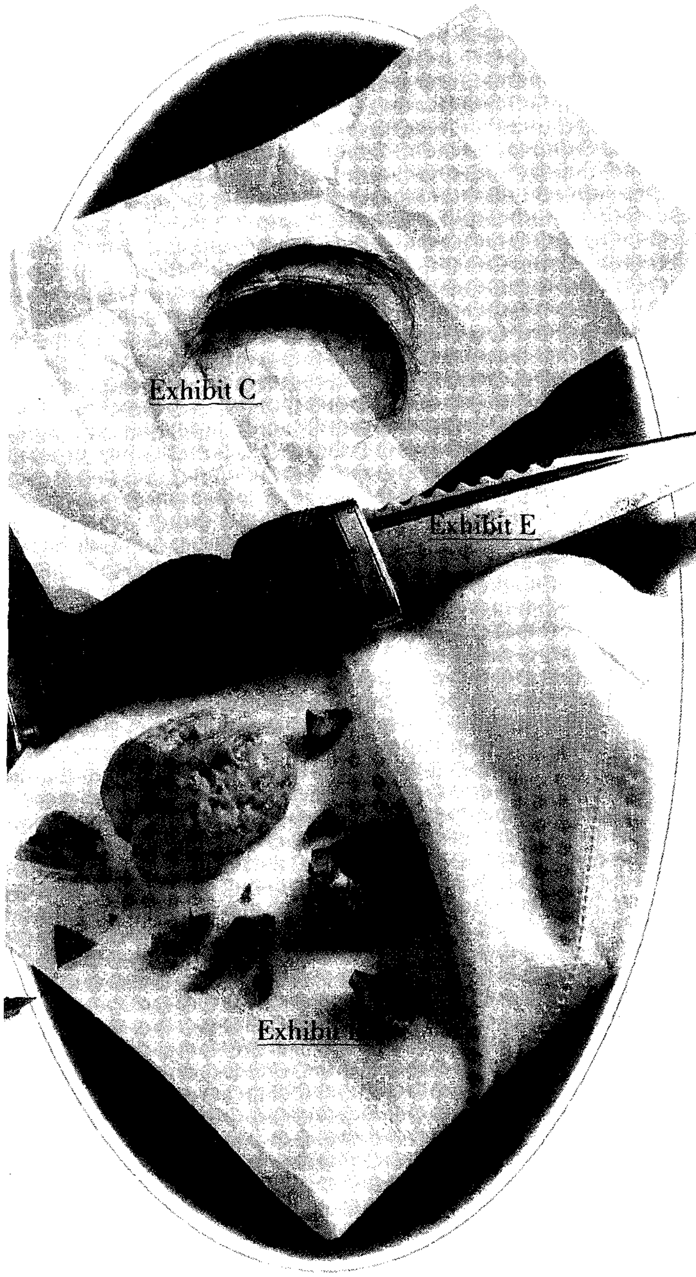
Under a magnifying glass one could, perhaps, even detect a trace of walnut shell. Concluding that continue to polish our fountain pen nibs in a rotati barrel of walnut shells for 56 hours (Exhibit D). Ma



PARKER FOUNTAIN PENS RANGE IN PRICE FROM $25 TO $2,250 FOR THE SOLID 18KT GOLD PREMIER. THE NEW PARKER DUOFOLD INTERNATIONAL HAS A SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE OF $250. THE DUOFOLD CENTENNIAL $300. © 1989 PARKER PEN USA LIMITED, JANESVILLE, WI 53547.

hur Conan Doyle write
Sherlock Holmes"?



of the old ways are still the best. Modern science has discovered, however, that tipping our nibs with ruthenium, a metal more precious than gold, makes them four times harder than steel (Exhibit E).

And what of the inner workings? State-of-the-art technology that would baffle the mind of Holmes himself. Consider the ink collector alone. Made up of hundreds of tiny fins, it is engineered to 0.75 of one thousandth of an inch to ensure the ink will not dry up, blotch or scratch under any normal writing conditions.

Pressureless writing indeed.

To provide an ample and convenient supply of ink, today's Duofold is also designed to be filled by cartridge or bottle.

In selecting a fountain pen we hope you will take a page out of one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's books.

In the mystery, "A Scandal in Bohemia," Sherlock Holmes asks Dr. Watson how many times he has seen the steps leading to their apartment.

"Frequently."

"How often?"

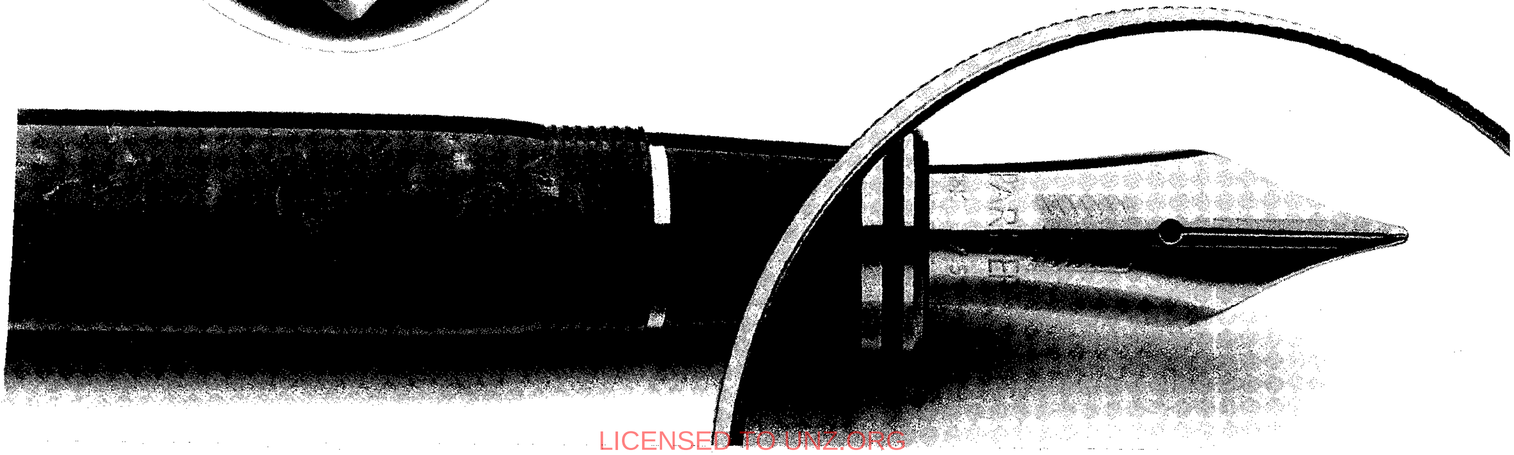
"Well, some hundreds of times."

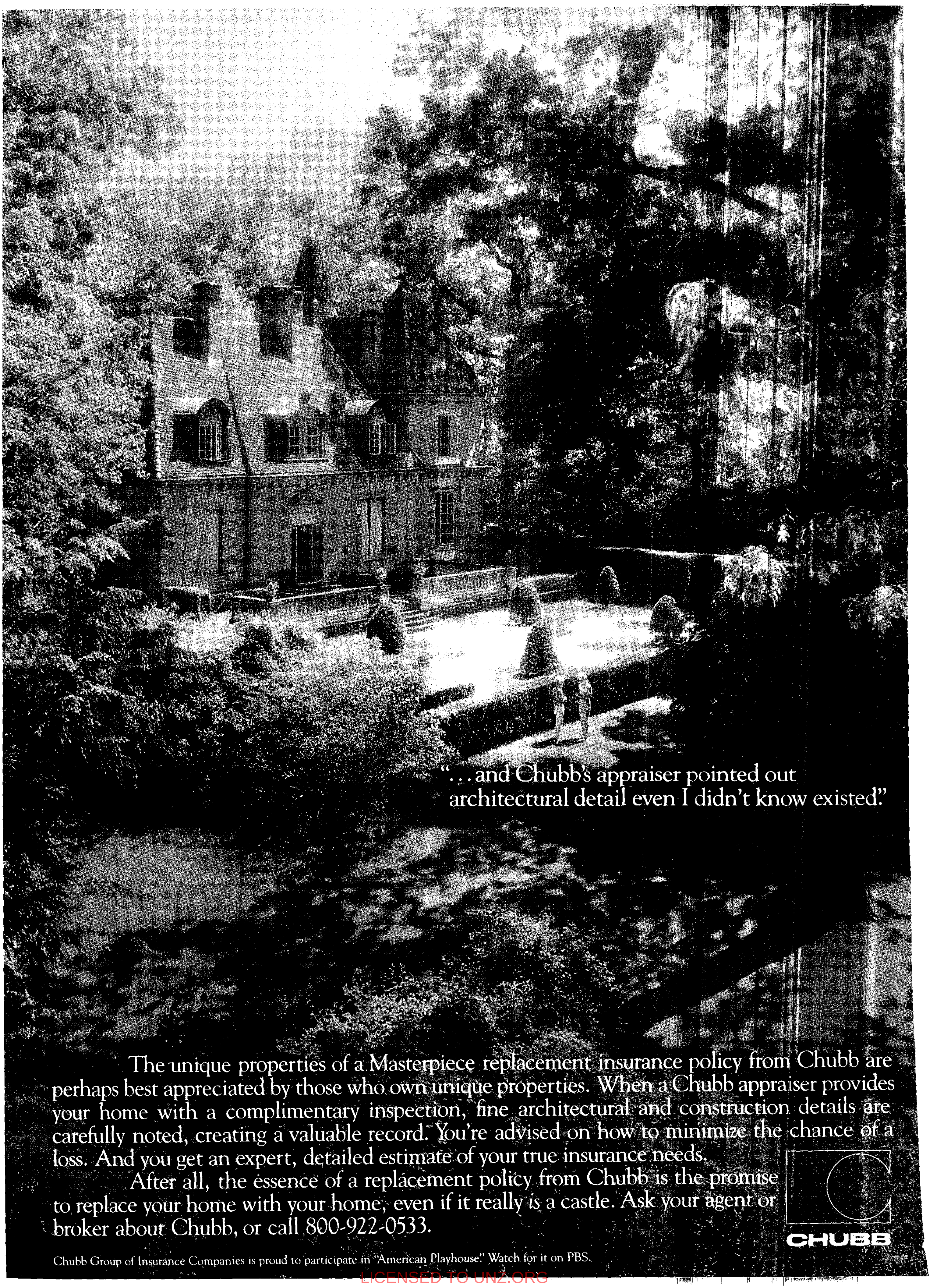
"Then how many are there?"

"How many! I don't know."

"Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen."

PARKER

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE essay we meant to write on the End of the Eighties was written much better by a writer at another magazine, we found out last week, and that left us with a free day to go out and get lost. A golden October day in New York. We went to Brooklyn and shopped for a jukebox and did not buy one, we rode the CC train up to Central Park, we poked around in a bookstore, looking for a computer manual, and bought a copy of Mark Twain's "Letters"—a loose day brightened by the fact that somebody else had done the work.

We needed a manual because the manual that came with our computer is a true document of the eighties—written in a language similar to English but with other words substituted for the ones the writer must have meant. Like this:

> The header function of the CONRAD command defines the glyph component (plus or minus value) of all data fonts and also the parameters of the bit map. For the validity of the command, see *Test bites 6-13.*

This does not become clearer the harder you think about it, so everything we know about the computer we learned by calling up a friend who bought one, too, and doesn't understand it, either, except how to put stuff in (F10) and print stuff out (Shift-F7).

The jukebox we didn't buy was a German reproduction of a 1946 Wurlitzer, with a fantastic front grille of bubble tubes and plastic columns lit up red and green and blue and yellow, and we don't know why we didn't buy it, because it was exactly what we've wanted for years. To look at it made us instantly smile and think of Chuck Berry. We'd been buying a few 45s for the jukebox we thought we were going to have someday, and three of them were his: "Sweet Little Sixteen," "Memphis," and "Carol." Others were "There's No Other" (the Crystals), "Mr. Bass Man" (Johnny Cymbal), "Long Tall Sally" (Little Richard), "Little Sister" (Elvis Presley), "Red Rooster" (Howlin' Wolf), "Dedicated to the One I Love" (the Shirelles), "Third Rate Romance" (Amazing Rhythm Aces), and "Out from Jail" (Warumpi Band). Some others we'd rather not mention—some songs look dumb in print but when you punch them up on a jukebox they make your feet talk.

So often these days, our feet just mumble, and that's a shame, so we stood and studied the jukebox a long time. It was a little bigger than we had imagined—as big as an icebox—and brighter, too: you couldn't sit in the room with that jukebox and read a book. It was also a little more expensive than we had expected, but we have a credit card and some strong eighties tendencies. (*Go for it!* and *What the hey?*) We almost bought it and almost bought it, and then we walked away, and when we got outside we took a deep breath. To own something so romantic would be a job in itself. We came within an inch of ownership, and now, riding the train back to Manhattan, we felt a tremendous sense of whatever the opposite of buyer's remorse is called (shopper's relief?), having evaded the thing we wanted so much, being free to keep wanting it in the future.

We rode to Times Square and considered swinging by the office, but there was nothing for us to do there, the eighties having been summed up. So we transferred to the CC train going uptown. It was good to ride the old wreck again. After the steam-pipe rupture last month spread asbestos in the subway tunnel between Times Square and Columbus Circle and shut down the line, we assumed the worst—that the CC would stay stopped (ASBESTOS CLEANUP REVEALS TUNNEL ROT / EIGHTH AVE. CLOSED/REPAIR MAY TAKE DECADE AND COST ZILLIONS) and wind up on the cover of *Newsweek* as a symbol of the Long Grim Night of New York. Instead, we got on board and went rattling and screeching up to Central Park. We got out at Eighty-first and walked across the Great Lawn, dodging the touch-football games, and around the Reservoir.

At the Eighty-first Street entrance: a man of advanced age pushing a baby carriage, who may have been the child's grandfather or its father—a hard call these days. Some of the older football players looked as if their hair used to be much longer: a couple of crewcuts seemed to pleat at the nape, as if a ponytail once hung there. The younger men wore their hair in today's style—a forties look. Two women striding together in similar trim suits had surely worn big, hairy wool skirts with twigs woven in and silky peasant shirts through the sixties. We saw other women walking with men but not hanging on them, the way they used to in the fifties. Arched cast-iron bridges out of fairy tales, and, not far away, old, old men sitting and yammering about life in Odessa in the thirties. Fleets of joggers coursing around the Reservoir path, each with his or her distinctive gait—the Dogtrot, the Bound, the Lope, the Waddle, the Schlep—and each carrying the flame of the seventies. The eighties were there somewhere, but when you look back at the Lake and see the Dakota looming up you suddenly recall the famous photograph of skaters with the Dakota looming behind them, and it's the *eighteen*-eighties you think of.

On August 24, 1853, Samuel Clemens, who was seventeen years old and not yet Mark Twain, wrote to his mother, Jane Clemens, in Hannibal, that he had arrived in New York. He had left Hannibal in June, telling her he was going to St. Louis to live with his sister Pamela, and he did for a while; then he set out on a five-day journey to New York by steamboat and train to see the World's Fair. "My dear Mother, you will doubtless be a little surprised, and somewhat angry when you receive this, and find me so far from home; but you must bear a little with me, for you know I was always the best boy you had," he begins. It's the earliest piece of writing by him that survives. A week later, he has found a room in a boarding house on Duane Street and got a job setting type in John A. Gray's printing office, at 97 Cliff Street. We stood in a bookstore on Madison Avenue just east of the Park, leaning against a counter, and read this. Young Sam rose at six, was at work at seven. From the office window on the fifth floor at Duane Street he had a pretty good view of the city, the ships packed tightly at the wharves around Manhattan Island a "forest of masts." He walked the streets, saw the fair, saw Edwin Forrest in "Gladiator" at the Broadway Theatre, saw a parade of veterans of the War of 1812, with a few graybeards from the Revolution in the ranks, and visited the Crystal Palace and the Latting Observatory ("height about 280 feet"), which stood between Forty-second and Forty-third, on a block we can see from *our* office window, and the Croton Aqueduct—"the greatest wonder yet."

On October 8, 1853, which was when our legs fell asleep and we finally headed for the cash register to buy the book, he was still in town. "I have not written to any of the family for some time . . . because I have been fooling myself with the idea that I was going to leave New York, every day for the last two weeks," he wrote to Pamela. "I have taken a liking to the abominable place, and every time I get ready to leave, I put it off a day or so, from some unaccountable cause. It is just as hard on my conscience to leave New York as it was *easy* to leave Hannibal. I think I shall get off Tuesday, though."

Those sentences come zinging at us out of the eighteen-fifties as fresh as if they were written this morning over coffee: the boy in our neighborhood caught up in the sights and smells of the city. Somehow, to think of the eighties gone by is to feel the immaculate possibility of the present moment, the same dazzling present that the boy writes in. Everything we might have written about the end of the eighties struck us as true but also, after a day of walking around, not really to the point. A greedy, cynical, glitzy decade, during which America did nothing distinguished whatsoever, and yet it can be reversed in an instant, just as the CC train can run again or the boy can leave on Tuesday. The dazzling possibility of the moment: you pass the ball and take three steps into the slot and turn, here's the ball again, *bam*, you fake, *ha*, you jump, *yeah*, and at the top of your jump time stops. You float in the air, the ball on your fingertips, your man flopping around down where you faked him out, and you see the rim, and shoot. And then you hit the ground.

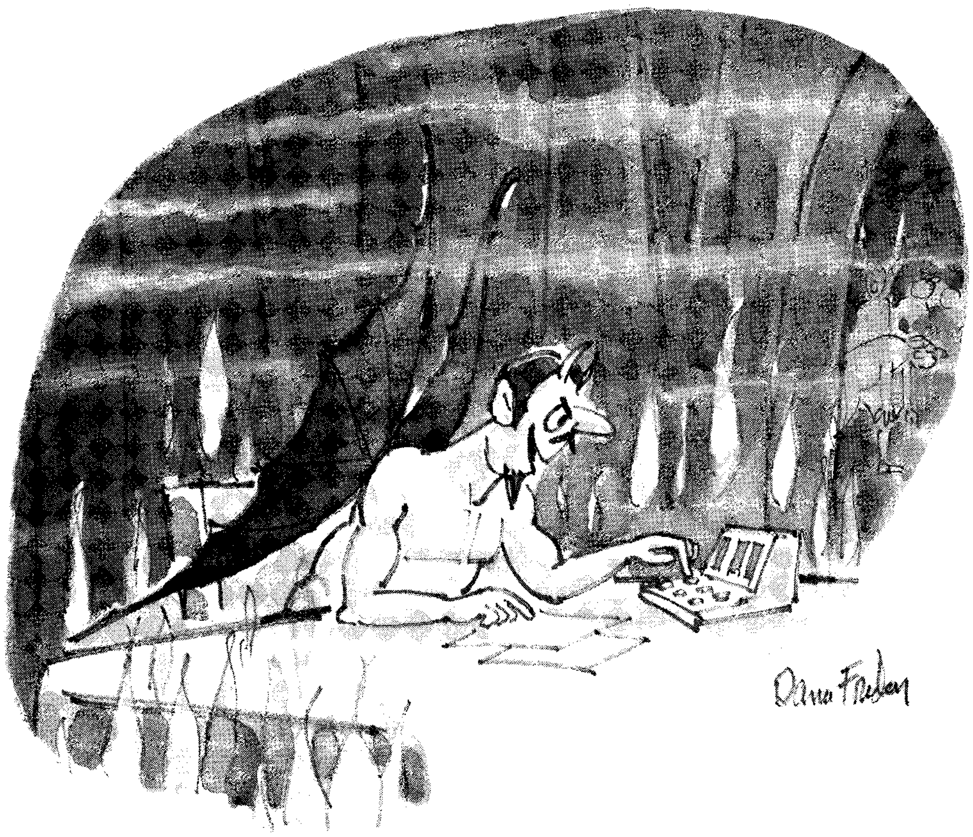
One moment that distinguished the eighties in our memory was the day we drove our son to take his driver's test. This was during Reagan's second term, and our son was one year younger than Samuel Clemens in 1853. On the way to the testing station, we rehearsed in our mind what we'd say on the way home ("I know how you feel. I failed my first time, too, and I felt bad. But there's really no reason to feel bad. Failure is just another kind of experience, and every success *begins* with a failure"), but then he passed easily and was elated, and he drove us home. "I need to use the car, O.K.?" he said. "To go see someone." He dropped us at the curb. We watched the car pull away, a large moment in life that had come a little sooner than we expected. The car drove slowly one block, remaining in its lane, its left-turn signal blinking, and then it turned and its tires squealed and it disappeared into the future.

• •

Intention

A YOUNG New Yorker writes from Santa Fe:

The other Friday, I found myself drinking coffee at a café on Galisteo Street with an attractive, outdoorsy woman who had her daughter (born on a sailboat and named Ocean) with her. When she happened to remark that she was Jewish, I asked her about local Rosh Hashanah services, and she said that there were some, certainly, and I would be welcome to attend, and she gave me an address. So after a day of aimlessly touring the town (I'd been on the road for three months and was starting to lose my enthusiasm for travel) I shaved and showered at my motel, put on my only reasonably civil-looking shirt (a white one), and, map in hand, drove to Temple Beth Shalom, on Barcelona Road. I parked the car, and as I walked past a lot of other cars, parked on both sides of the street, I felt as if I were back on Long Island—a quiet dusk, cool air, even a few leaves falling. The only differences were that I was alone here, and all the license plates were yellow and said "New Mexico USA" and, in smaller letters, "Land of Enchantment."



“*Miss Clark, find Joe Stalin and tell him Communism is dead.*”

• •

This was a reform service, and I guess I was expecting something funkier, wilder—more *enchanting.* It was being held in a new, extremely large stucco-and-glass building behind a smaller, older building, where a traditional service was taking place, and what I found when I went in was a dressy crowd, a solidly rehearsed choir, and a prayerbook and sermon that did not inspire me. I did see one boy, maybe nine or ten years old, wearing an earring, and there were a few people in bluejeans, and an occasional guy with long hair, but basically this was a nice crowd of over six hundred professional-looking people on their best behavior. Santa Fe is a lot more like Long Island than you'd expect.

On Saturday, I thought about going to the smaller, traditional service, but didn't, even though I passed right by the synagogue on my way to the Center for Contemporary Arts. I also intended to go to the Conservative service on Sunday morning, but stayed up way too late Saturday night, and instead ended up driving with a friend past pueblos, mesas, red cliffs, and mountains to Abiquiu, where Georgia O'Keeffe lived and painted. I definitely planned to be back in town for the final services of Rosh Hashanah that evening, though. They would be for the die-hard observant Jews of Santa Fe, and I hoped to find the kind of (drug-free) religious experience that many people my age, having memorized Thoreau and Castaneda in their formative years, still like to encounter.

So on Sunday evening, back in my white shirt, I bicycled to Barcelona Road before sunset, determined to enrich my spirit through prayer and meditation. What I found when I got to the old synagogue was that its doors were locked. Nobody was there, even though a flyer I had picked up on Friday night listed the Ma'ariv service for six-forty-five Sunday evening. But across the parking lot, in the new synagogue, a light was on, and I could see a few people sitting in a little room. I walked over and stuck my head in. A woman about forty-five years old and three teen-agers in shorts and T-shirts were busy writing while finishing up a pizza. The woman, whose name was Judith, knew nothing about the missing services but invited me to sit down and join her group—a class for high-school students. Judith, I learned, was a psychiatrist and aspiring writer who had been converted to Judaism in her mid-thirties. The Reform textbook she was teaching from was about the Cabbalah—Jewish mysticism—and the chapter under consideration that evening was about the increasingly deep levels on which one can read and interpret a friendship, a film, or the Torah.

Judaism is a religion that is based largely on study and action. Judith used a word I didn't remember from my Hebrew-school days—*cavanah.* It means “intention.” To pray with intention, to act with intention, to read with intention, to study with intention is to do those things in a spiritual way. We read and discussed the passage from the Torah that had been recited in the synagogue that day—Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Sandra, a student with a mouthful of braces, found Abraham's blind faith and willingness to sacrifice his son abhorrent. Judith recalled that the class members had already decided that if they ever saw a burning bush in the desert around here they would put it out. She talked about a man who had stood behind her in line at a drinking fountain in the town plaza and had informed her that God had commanded him to kill anyone who was standing in front of him in line at the drinking fountain; she told us she had replied, “Thank you for telling me that,” and had got out of his way.

We studied together for two hours. The seriousness of the students, the simultaneous lightness and depth of Judith's approach, the fact that there in Santa Fe on Sunday night, after all those services and with school the following day, teen-agers could be so deeply involved in studying reminded me how rich the text of travel can also be when it's approached with intention—with *cavanah.* I rode my bike back to the motel that night, with stars bright over northern New Mexico, and felt ready to come home to New York, atone some, and get on with things.

Golden Girl

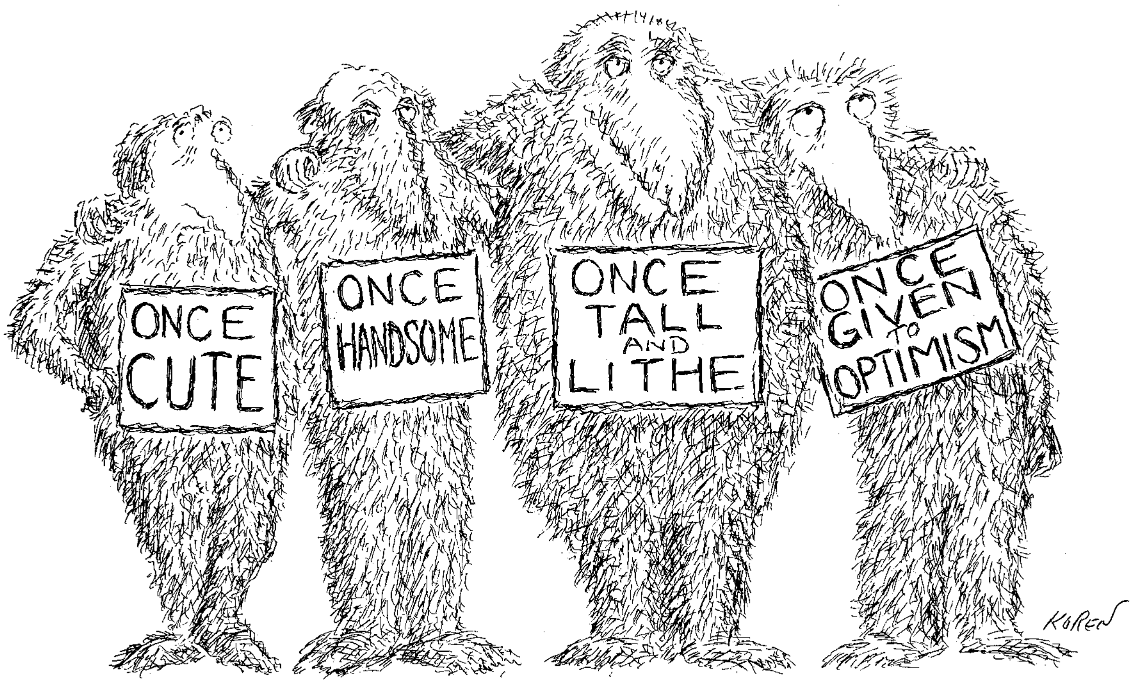
TAMARA GEVA—dancer, actress, director, writer—was born and spent her girlhood in pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg, the daughter of Levki Gevergeyev, who was one of the city's most cultivated men. She became George Balanchine's first wife while she was still in her teens, left with him and several colleagues on a little tour to dance in Germany, and never returned home in her parents' lifetimes. Dance fans know her as a soloist in several Balanchine works for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, as the dancer who introduced Balanchine's choreography to the United States (several solos on a 1927 concert program), as the ballerina of his "Errante," as the original Russian ballerina of the original Broadway production of "On Your Toes," and as the choreographer of the movie "The Specter of the Rose." She has also starred in the legitimate theatre—as Lina in "Misalliance," for instance. In 1972, she published "Split Seconds," a memoir of her Russian years; she wrote it without a ghostwriter, in English (a language that she has never studied in a classroom), and it stands as one of the most gracefully written books on the dance bookshelf. When we learned that Miss Geva would be our guide through "100 Years of Russian Ballet, 1830–1930"—a show from the Leningrad State Museum of Theatre and Music which is now at the Nakhamkin gallery—we dressed up in formal black. Miss Geva, however, was a study in lightness. Her hair, pale and shining, was set off by an ivory blouse, which she wore over fitted navy pinstripe slacks, and gold jewelry glinted at her ears, on a lapel, and across her hands. Because she was recovering from a knee injury, she carried a cane; it was made of Lucite, and she used it to point strenuously toward this or that painting more than she used it to lean on. She turned out to be good company, someone who clearly knew how to have fun. Balanchine would have loved her, we thought; then we remembered that he did.

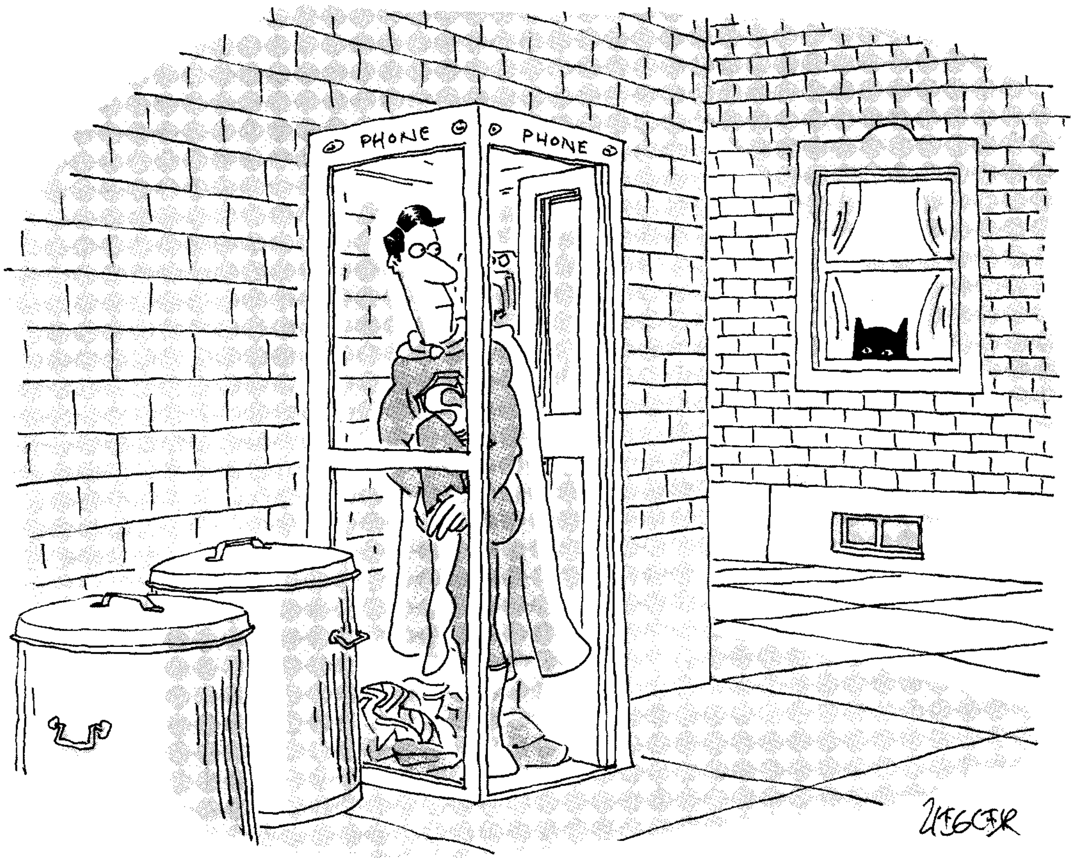
Much of the "Russian Ballet" show is concerned with ballet before Balanchine. Miss Geva learned about those years primarily through her father. A bibliophile and connoisseur of painting and theatrical materials, Gevergeyev amassed an important collection on ballet in Russia. He also built a small theatre for experimental productions, which is still in use. After the revolution, his collection helped to form the core collection of the State Museum, founded in 1918, with him as its first curator-director. As Miss Geva walked us through the Nakhamkin, she kept flourishing her cane to indicate images she had grown up with: four ravishing hand-tinted Chalon lithographs of Taglioni; a jewel-colored set design by Boris Anisfeld for something called "The Seven Daughters of the Ghost King (The Three Palms)." "That was on the living-room wall," she said of the latter. "I saw it every day."

Pausing before a case of photographs of ballerinas who came to prominence at the turn of the century, she wrinkled up her nose. "Look how fat they are!" she said. "Especially that one." She meant Marie Petipa, the first Lilac Fairy in "The Sleeping Beauty." "Now, when Diaghilev took us up we all ate like horses. No, horses eat very little. We ate like birds, who eat as much as their own weight every day. But that was because we were starving after the revolution. And *look* at the positions. Just forty-five degrees for an arabesque; today, after Balanchine, the leg goes up to God knows where. But they followed certain traditions—arabesques higher than forty-five degrees weren't done at the Imperial Theatre. And they didn't turn to the left side. I was told that in the old days of the czars there was a reason that all the dancers turned to the right. Just above stage level, right-hand side, was a box with a curtain that was usually closed. But sometimes members of the imperial family would sneak in there, instead of using the big royal box in the center of the first ring. So everyone onstage wanted to be sure to be seen by the right-hand box. George said this was silly, and he made everyone turn to the left. He broke all the rules. But he never forgot the alphabet of dancing, the way so many others have."

Miss Geva went on to say that the show wasn't something she had expected. One day, some Soviet curators knocked on her door, here in Manhattan, and introduced themselves as the guardians of her father's legacy to Russian art and culture. "What they said!" she exclaimed. "One young woman spoke of my father so enthusiastically that I said to her, 'You're talking like a woman in love.' Another said to me, 'I think I've known you all my life through the things of your father's.' "

Miss Geva swept her cane toward a group of filmy silk costumes—still paintpot brilliant—from the early years of the Ballets Russes, and said, "All this was so long ago. I have met so many people and done so many things since. In certain lives, there comes a moment when everything changes, of course. In 1924, I stepped on the boat to Germany,





and my life up to then disappeared—all except George. Years later, I heard that my father was killed in the war. Now, suddenly, that life comes back, complete with my childhood. Complete with *him*. Being here, I have a strange feeling—as if there were no space between then and this, as if everything in between were imagination."

Last Ups

A FRIEND with a cold has faxed over the following:

Last ballgame of season at Shea Stadium. Last home game of the *decade*, really. Autumn equinox has come and gone. Nights begin earlier. First pitch to visiting Phillies delivered an hour after sunset. No bugs around lights. Crisp, chilly night has Honolulu-born Ron Darling regularly breathing on right hand.

Stadium a little over a third full. Some fans sit sideways, stretching legs across many dollars' worth of empty seats. As game progresses, other fans sneak down to field level, grab empty company-owned seats. Some sneak into behind-the-plate seats normally reserved for Met wives. *Excuse me, Mrs. McReynolds, I must be in the wrong seat. Sorry, Mrs. Teufel. Sorry about Kid's season, Mrs. Carter.* Mets threaten and do not score.

Second-inning temperature fifty-five degrees. Fans spread blankets over legs. Girls in line at hot-dog stand wrapped like Indians. Yves-Marc, one of three boys hawking ice cream in mezzanine, scores laughs with line "Ice cream! Get it now before it melts!" Beer sales not much affected by seasonal change.

Try to ignore cold. Concentrate on game. Hear guys theorizing about Mets' chances next year. Two men on. Two-strike count on Philly center fielder Curt Ford. Some guy tries to start Double-Play-*clap-clap*-Double-Play-*clap-clap* cheer. Unsuccessful. Ford checks with third-base coach Larry Bowa. Bowa's fingers go to left thigh, right thigh, chest, nose, ear, nose, ear, cap brim, nose, ear, nose, upper lip, ear, ear. Darling curveball a called strike. Ford stays planted. Stares at home-plate umpire Ed Montague for five full seconds. Walks to dugout. Fans love it. Scoreboard flashes "GOTCHA."

Guy rinses out dentures in rest-room sink, explains his love-hate thing with popcorn. Usher shakes rest-room attendant's hand, says, "So have a good— Wait! I'll see you for the Stones." (Rolling Stones to play series of October dates at Shea.)

Fielder's Choice, concession stand offering fancier snacks, having tough last game. People want onion rings. All gone till next year. Nachos with cheese? Sorry. Sausage-and-pepper hero? Very last one of the season goes to guy wearing a scarf. Guy behind him, wearing Mets ski cap with N.Y. Giants sweater, about to get bad corn-on-the-cob news. Settles for hot dog, coffee. Girl behind counter warms fingers over slowly turning hot-dog rods.

Keith Hernandez up to pinch-hit in eighth. Standing ovation from remaining fans. Free agent next year. Hits many fouls, then flies out. Bob Murphy, on the WFAN radio broadcast, says, "That may very well have been the last ever at bat at Shea for Keith Hernandez as a Met." Standing ovation No. 2 when Carter comes out to catch the ninth. No. 3 later, when Carter doubles to left. Several beach balls appear. Some guys in seats down by Met dugout turn around and try to figure out exactly where in mezzanine gooey dates are being launched from.

Gregg Jefferies (scorebook says 5′ 10″, 175 lbs.) grounds out to end game, which Phillies take, 5–3. After tagging first, he charges to mound. Wrestles ex-Met reliever Roger McDowell (6′ 1″, 185 lbs.). Benches empty. Order soon restored.

Mackey Sasser, one for three, is first player seen leaving Shea. Drives off in black-and-gold Chevy Blazer. Sid Fernandez leaves with grandparents from Hawaii. Black Chevy Blazer. Then John Mitchell, in Chevy Blazer with Tennessee plates. Popularity of Blazers with Mets a stat of some significance? Probably not.

Teen-ager outside stadium holds Mets caps high. "Only four dollars! Save 'em for next year!" *Times* foliage forecast reports Adirondacks now showing fifty-per-cent color change.

HOW THE SAVINGS AND LOANS WERE SAVED

THE President was playing badminton in Aspen the day vast hordes of barbaric Huns invaded Chicago, and a reporter whose aunt lives in Evanston shouted to him as he headed for the clubhouse, "The Huns are wreaking carnage in Chicago, Mr. President! Any comment?"

Mr. Bush, though caught off guard by news of the invasion, said, "We're following that whole Hun situation very closely, and right now it looks encouraging, but I'm hoping we can get back to you in a few hours with something more definite." The President appeared concerned but relaxed and definitely chins-up and in charge.

As he spoke, the good citizens of Chicago were fortifying the Loop and organizing scalding-oil brigades, but their caldrons never got hot enough, and soon the hordes broke through, miles of them—wave after wave of squat, flat-nosed horsemen on their ugly steeds galumphing through the streets, waving their hairy fists, rolling their little red eyes under the long black eyebrow, grunting and blatting and howling, bellowing at women in a coarse, unintelligible tongue that sounded like irate geese.

Over the next three days, as additional hordes of Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Hloths, Wendells, and Vandals swarmed into the Windy City with relentless, locustlike ferocity, and burned churches and performing-arts centers and historic restorations, and dragged away monks, virgins, associate professors, and postal employees to be sold into slavery, and seized great stores of treasures and heirlooms and sacred vessels, and tore down libraries and devastated three-star restaurants and traded away the Cubs and Bears, Mr. Bush was said to be conferring with John Sununu, meeting with the Cabinet, weighing his options, on the verge of taking some kind of dramatic action. To those close to him he appeared burdened but still strong, upbeat but not glib, and then in came Robert Teeter with a poll that showed that seventy per cent of the American people thought the President was doing an excellent job with the barbarians. Mr. Bush was seen as confident and in charge but not beleaguered or vulnerable or damp under the arms, the way Jimmy Carter was. Most Americans admired the way George Bush played down the story and wasn't weakened or distracted by it. They felt that he was doing exactly the right thing, and they viewed Chicago as a place where a lot of pretty rough stuff goes on most of the time anyway.

So the President didn't make an address to the nation on television but simply issued a statement that barbarianism is a long-term problem and must be met with patience and wisdom, and the answer is education, and everything that can be done is being done and will continue to be done. It called for bipartisanship. That evening, a White House croquet tournament went on as planned. The President appeared calm but interested.

The barbarians made their squalid camps in the streets and took over the savings-and-loan offices. ("Savings and loan" sounds the same as the Hun word *chfnxnln*, which means henhouse.) They broke out all the windows and covered them with sheepskins, they squatted in the offices around campfires built from teak and mahogany desks and armoires, eating half-cooked collie haunches and platters of cat brains and drinking gallons of after-shave. Their leader, Mogul the Vile, son of Generic, squatted down beside a speakerphone on the thirty-eighth floor of American National and called the White House and babbled and screeched for more than twenty minutes. His English was horrendous. He seemed to be demanding a ransom of three chests of gold and silver, six thousand silk garments, miscellaneous mirrors and skins and beads, three thousand pounds of oregano, and a hundred and sixty-six billion dollars in cash.

The President, who did not speak to him personally, pondered the outrageous demand. He appeared quiet but wakeful, thoughtful but not grumpy. On the one hand, a major American city was in the hands of rapacious brutes, but, on the other hand, exit polling at shopping malls showed that people thought he was handling it O.K. So he flew to Kennebunkport for a week of tennis and fishing. He appeared relaxed but hearty, animated but restrained.

A few days later, the Hun sacking of Chicago was old news. It had already happened. Mr. Bush, in striking a note of determination right at the beginning and then refusing to be stampeded into action, had outflanked the entire story and avoided any loss of public support. The press covered the pillaging up north, but most of the press was in Washington, not Chicago, and what could you say about Huns that everybody didn't already know? Huns perspire heavily; they despise agriculture and don't eat vegetables, only meat and gravy and desserts, and they drink bad sweet wine; their clothes are ill-fitting and covered with lint; they smell bad and their hair is limp and dull, and they're ugly as a mud fence: short, flat-faced, thick-lipped, illiterate, grunty people with heavy brows, hairy backs, and no necks. And their relationship with the press is very, very poor. Everyone knew these things a long time ago. On the other hand, collie haunches can be very tasty if you braise them with plenty of garlic over a trash fire, and some reporters who tried collie wrote long Sunday pieces about Hun life styles that concluded they were barbaric, heck yes, but thrilling and possessed of a drop-dead visceral authenticity.

The President decided not to interfere with the takeover attempts in the savings-and-loan industry and to pay the hundred and sixty-six billion dollars, not as a ransom of any type but as ordinary government support, plain and simple, absolutely nothing irregular about it, and the Huns and the Vandals rode away, carrying their treasure with them, and the Goths sailed away up Lake Michigan. Gothic boats are hard to handle, though, being built of stone, with great high arches that make them tippy, and they all sank in Lake Michigan in a light breeze, carrying half the loot to the bottom, but not before the President's chopper landed in Grant Park. A serious-faced George Bush stood at the water's edge, hair blowing from the backwash of the rotor, and announced that the barbarians had left. He said that the savings-and-loan industry was sounder than at any time in its history. He announced that he was deeply moved by the heroism of the people of Chicago and reiterated his opposition to barbarianism of any kind whatsoever.

—GARRISON KEILLOR

PROWLER

A NEW development, and more than he can bear: his ex-wife is abruptly back from Europe, her boyfriend of the last two years nowhere in sight. The tortoiseshell glasses alert him that Christie, confronting him across his own living room, has reinvented herself yet again. She has never before worn glasses, and it is plain to Dennis only because he knows her so well that they still excite her as a novelty, a kind of prop. She has a new gesture—index finger laid against the bridge of her nose to give the specs a tiny upward shove, brown eyes widening—that manages to get across the impression that she is taking life more seriously, yet her account of the last year smells of evasiveness. Déjà vu, because his old sense, with Christie, was often that she was skipping details that might not reflect well on her, editing and enlarging as she went, and that he was essentially helpless to pin her to the truth. Christie is all in baggy black, her legs crossed, one black, doltish boot swinging. She wants their son for the summer.

"George has stayed behind," she says with a faint, enigmatic tone of apology. Not even that is clear. Not "I've left him" or "It was all a mistake" but "George has stayed behind." In Paris, where she lived with him for the last year.

PIZZA, THE CD

By a coincidence, Dennis and Christie both began second families last year, she with George, Dennis with his young wife, Francesca. Christie's baby girl has been left in Santa Fe with a sitter. His twins are asleep upstairs with their mother, all of them exhausted by the cold they have been sharing back and forth. Kenny, his and Christie's thirteen-year-old, is away overnight with his best friend; when Dennis heard a car grind to a halt in the rocky drive, he had a scared flash that Kenny and Leo had got into trouble and somebody had been sent to tell him so. For next to no reason, Dennis distrusts Leo, a good-looking, slightly hyper kid, self-assured around adults in a way Kenny never will be, not until he's one himself—maybe not even then. Leo's girlfriend works in a record shop where Kenny and Leo are always hanging out. Kenny can't drive yet, of course, and neither can Leo. It's real proof of Leo's fast-talking charm that he has a sixteen-year-old girlfriend. Leo's mother, who doesn't approve of the girlfriend, drives the boys to the mall, because otherwise, she says, they'd hitchhike. Maybe it's Leo's mother Dennis dislikes. She gives in to the boys too easily. She was Christie's lawyer, trim and venomous, during the divorce.

What kind of trouble does he imagine his son getting into? Dennis has no very stable or obsessive idea, just occasional glints, in which Kenny pockets a Baggie of white powder, or, with faked knowingness, hoovers a furled five-dollar bill over a mirror, talked into these idiot risks by Leo. None of those fears come true; instead an altogether different problem materializes. The car that startled him belongs to Kenny's mother.

Christie's never been in the house before, and one of his reactions at letting her in strikes Dennis as inappropriate, disturbingly so, and he hides it: he'd like to know what she thinks. He's an architect, and when he first came across this house it was a warren of low-ceilinged rooms whose windows were, in the old-fashioned way, quite small. Cottonwoods grew right up to the walls. Such a shaded, wood-fragrant, down-at-heels little place: he wanted it. In renovating, he's changed it very little.

"Nice," Christie says of the room, sitting, crossing her black legs, beginning to pick at the cuticle of her thumb, and he asks himself why he wanted more from her. Glancing up, she reads his disappointment, and makes a face. *What do you expect?* the face says. *This is where you live your new life.* The face implies that she knew such a muted reaction would hurt. More than anything, he wants her to stop picking away at her cuticle. If she can get at him so fast, so nonchalantly, he'd better watch it.

"Can we turn on another light?" she says.

When he does, he has to admire the kinked mass of her dark hair, backlit. Even with the glasses, she looks good. She's already lost whatever weight she gained with the baby.

"Coffee?" he says, for a chance to leave the room. He pokes through a drawer for Melitta filters, then stares around the kitchen, catching his emotional breath, reorienting himself. "Tea," Christie calls. Her tone's not rude, and he's no longer annoyed with her, but it troubles him that, this

GARDENS

I

Someone once described the Japanese garden
as "trivialities arranged to look
significant." So might we label one kind
of poem, whose dry hint of a river or brook,
raked free of detritus, briefly flows, turns
into terraces (abstraction of waterfall),
and comes to its end in a large, strict rectangle
of the same white sand (the sea, the All
or Nothingness) whose stone, showing its white
above the moss that wraps its lower part,
can be read as a high mountain, forested
and snowcapped, in this metaphoric art.
Guided by its setting in white space
proportionally vast, the making mind
of the beholder, which walks hand in hand
with the austere creator, fast will find
one dwarf pine's looming. Shading, importance, meaning
tower from the green suggestion. Delicacy
molds throughout a narrow path between Nature's
carelessness and the lifeless rigidity
of perfect order. A world is here that returns
to pure idea when we look away,
its grasp on our hearts being as miniature
as the memory of one faultless, serene day.

II

But there is another kind of garden, another
poetry (might we say?), whose "mimicry
of endlessness" calls upon every muscle
of self, while the senses are whelmed toward idolatry.
To enter its rich acreage is to know
that much must be left for another day, or year,
or season. Though Flora stands in stone, her kingdoms
of brilliant imagery cloud over or clear—
rose beds, meadows of daffodil, rainbow
borders, wild blooms under tree shade—as time, as the sun,
changes their tourist. Next, breathtaking steeps and valleys,
then a Grotto for those the passage has undone,
attended by a kind-faced river god.
Then, for sheer swagger, creation clipped to dream,
the topiary work, the artist's little
joke on Nature, horseplay with be and seem.
Courage challenged, trusting the maker, one
may enter a Maze and step by step, deeper
into bewilderment, find in the yews
the cool and colder rehearsal of the sleeper
who loses in darkness time, place, others,
sense of self. But no, this is not that last
labyrinth of Minotaur or tomb,
and a string one hadn't noticed leads back fast,
the strong string that ties art to serious play.
And now the woods where "art is used but to
conceal art." Light and dark and the dapple
of both are inside. Here and there a few
bright lines of birches sketch the merest hint
of happiness for all lost children, old
and young, scattering breadcrumbs in hope of home,
for lovers meeting in secret, Tristan, Isolde.
Strange, rare trees have been planted to look
at home with the colloquial. Deep
but penetrable, the woods release their guest,
having shown him beds of fern and heartsease they keep.
What loving lavishness creates such gardens—
worlds of thought and feeling as real as the world?
It is late. One stops and rests near a flowery fountain,
thinking with joy of what the tour unfurled,
thoughts that turn one's head toward a last far view,
the eye being led uphill by an aisle of green
between marbles of calm Athena and hurrying Eros,
where the beautiful Folly of having lived can be seen.

—Mona Van Duyn

• •

long divorced, it's taken them all of five minutes to fall back into marital shorthand. O.K. Tea. He carries their two cups back with him, feeling both more guarded and surer about where to begin.

"Christie, weeks went by when you didn't call him. Once you let it go a month. February, right?"

She has too much at stake to lose her temper with him. That would have been her familiar next move, but she holds it fast, though her black thug's boot kicks air. "It costs a fortune."

"Do you think he understood being abandoned for a year? Then you show up here and you'd like to pick up"—Dennis snaps his fingers—"right where we left off."

"Did he tell you he felt abandoned by me? Are those his words?"

"The agreement that you get him summers depended on your trustworthiness."

"You're saying I have to be as predictable as you are, Dennis. You're saying I should never have had George in my life. I don't think that was the agreement."

A sort of ongoing record of their exchange—the conversation as he will replay it for Francesca—runs through his mind. Francesca listening, taking everything in, sometimes shaking her head or marvelling aloud, is his sanity. Francesca illustrates children's books. Christie's mercurial excess, which prevents her carrying anything through to the end, and Francesca's serene attention to detail—to root, trunk, twig, and every small, slanting leaf in the forest—could not be farther apart.

What fairy tale is it, where someone comes back at last for the beloved child? Because she's never seen well in the dark, he walks Christie out to her car. When a rock trips her, he catches her arm, and in the darkness she twists to face him before shaking off his hand. She would rather have fallen. They could be any bitter couple walking in the woods, tired of each other, tired of the way nothing is ever resolved between them. He had thought he was protected from such vivid involuntary remembrance of her past lives: her zazen phase, with its hours of formidable silence; the year during which she was convinced she was an actress; the macrobiotic diet she starved herself on; the novel she finished half of. There is an infant's car seat in the back of her Volvo, and she has wedged a bag of groceries in it, upright. So this visit really was on the spur of the moment.

Leaning into her window as she starts the Volvo, wanting to end on a slightly friendlier note, he asks whether she's found a place to live. She has. A week ago. In one of those apartment complexes where there's always something empty; he knows it.

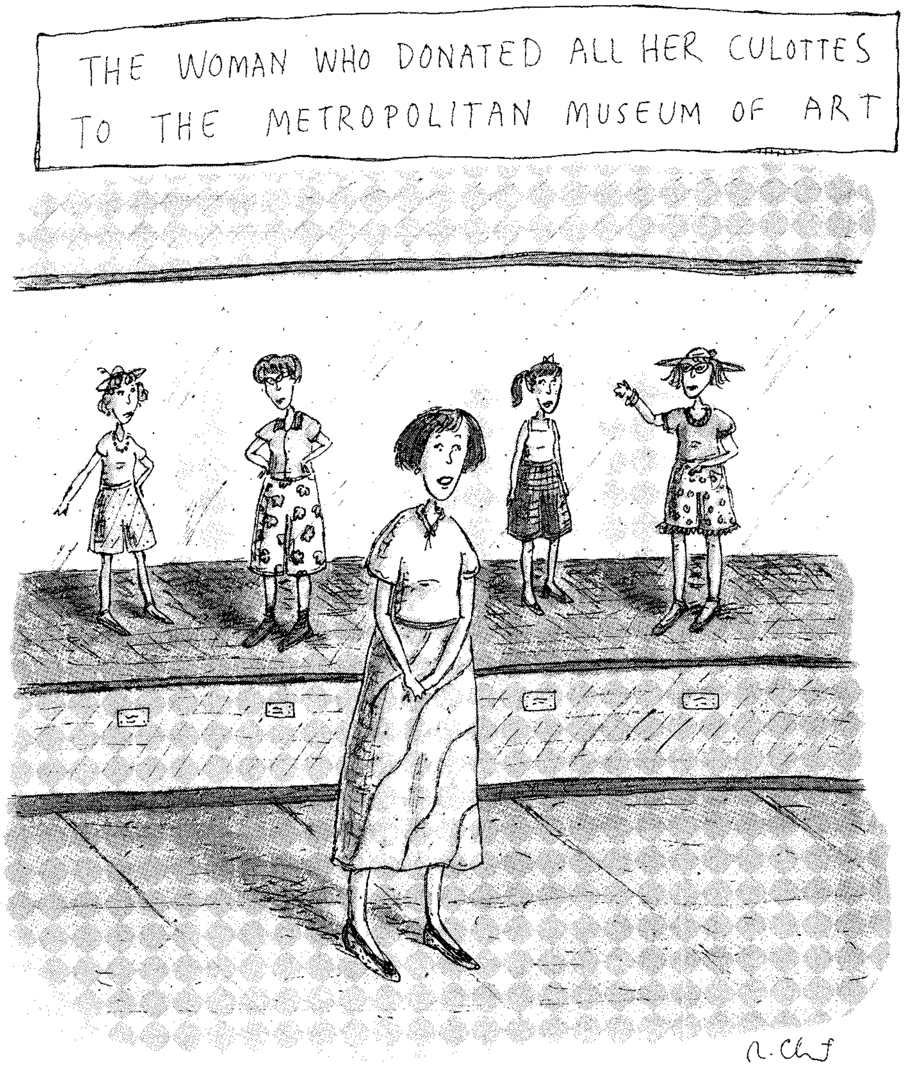
Then she can't resist circling back to their quarrel. "So you're saying no for the summer?"

"I think too much has changed."

"What's changed is that you're even more judgmental than before."

"You hurt him," he says.

"Dennis, we need to talk about this again." She takes a hand from the wheel, raking her hair from her face, the dark-rimmed glasses picking up tiny spots of light from somewhere. "I'll call you," she says, and he can't tell her not to.


THE WOMAN WHO DONATED ALL HER CULOTTES TO THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

• •

TONK plunk: something goes in upstream, where dark boulders take the moonlight full force. A head black and broad as a Labrador's, and as purposefully at home, shaves across the glassy, swelling smoothness that is the deepest part of the river. A beaver, a big one, and upwind, or it would have known Dennis was there. The spring wind, balmy and humid, blows across the river, and as it stirs Dennis's hair there is that slight, single instant in which he feels himself blameless.

His divorce seems a tight black tunnel he once forced himself and Kenny through, fearing each forward move, fearing still more getting stuck and suffocating. A blindly crawling exit from pain, his shy kid shoved along before him. So Kenny loves motorcycles, which do not creep, which proclaim in every line speed and certainty. Christie didn't ask, or didn't think she could ask, to see Kenny's room. Dennis believes it tells everything about Kenny: photo-realist motorcycles, chrome and highly evolved threat, grace the walls, along with a frail Kafka razor-bladed from a library book, a sin so small and so unprecedented that Dennis uncharacteristically forgot to mention it to him. If Kenny's motorcycle paintings are depressing, surely jug-eared Kafka promises complexity, contradiction, hope? When he was a little boy, Kenny painted houses with peaked roofs, surreal cats and dogs and birds, petroglyph parents—Dennis and Christie—with their hands linked over the head of a smaller, round-eyed creature, Kenny himself. Orange sun, blue house, green grass, all's well. The garish houses dwindled; the figures grew dwarfish and highly detailed and began carrying machine guns; Dennis and Christie were replaced by superbly muscled superheroes trouncing bad guys and aliens, and Kenny was seven. Ten was the year of the divorce. Thirteen is this plague of motorcycles, Leo's flawless smile, and hanging out at the mall. Oddly—at least Dennis wouldn't have predicted it—Kenny wrote regularly to his mother in France. Because Kenny didn't seem to consider them particularly private, and he was curious, Dennis sometimes read the letters. The light of the computer screen glowed on his son's clear forehead. He wanted her to know that he liked having a little sister. He wanted her to know that he thought about her. He really worked on the letters. None of the obvious things (When was she coming home? Ever?) were in the letters. His son knew by thirteen not to ask Christie certain questions.

AT the kitchen table Dennis eats slices of bologna folded into cold tortillas and drinks a beer, then scrapes and washes the day's dishes while the twins' bottles come bobblingly to a boil on the back of the stove. When Gavin wails, Dennis climbs the cantilevered stairs. Tim howls, coming to consciousness alongside his brother. Dennis lights a candle, his habit so that the overhead light won't dazzle Francesca, blinking awake. Dennis lays Gavin and Tim side by side on the bed. Francesca sits up. Theirs is a four-handed assembly line, the twins' bottoms bared, wiped, and diapered, neither boy crying, both staring from their giant calm father to their giant calm mother, who are talking softly together. Francesca takes Gavin; he can't lunge at the breast fast enough, and she laughs down at him. Though they're almost over the cold, the twins' breathing remains raspy. The wings of Francesca's nose are coarsely red, and her chest has the tonic stink of Vicks Vaporub, which neither boy seems to mind. Dennis cradles Tim, leaning back in an old chair whose upholstery is a kind of friendly maroon moss worn away, on the arms, in matching bald spots his elbows rest in as he angles the bottle up. Tim's warm head rests in a hand large enough to cup it completely. What weight was ever this good? A baseball fresh from the sporting-goods store, or his high-school girlfriend's breasts released from chilly white bra cups in a dark Chevrolet. Maybe. Francesca is uneasy, Dennis can tell. She isn't sure she understands exactly what is wrong, though he's told her everything that was said.

He says, "She can't have him this summer."

"Kenny has a father *and* a mother."

That lightly stressed "*and*" is criticism, and, subtle as it is, it stirs him to argue, "You wouldn't know that by the last year."

"She was far away."

"That's no excuse," he says, knowing she knows it's not, having advanced it only so that they could both examine its weakness—could see, through the excuse's transparency, Christie's habitual irresponsibility. For a time they sit quietly, each with an urgently sucking baby, until, in Dennis's arm, Tim yawns, a thumb gliding into his mouth, his body's weight going sated and more vague, so that it's only a matter of settling him into the crib. Then Dennis leans to take Gavin. This is tense, because Gavin's crying, if he starts, will rouse his brother, but Gavin sleeps. Ah, silence. "We're good," Dennis says, and the answer is an amused, complicitous, "Good? Great." He sits on the bed, not ready yet to climb under the covers, some chord in him still vibrating at a tense, post-Christie pitch. Francesca stretches, then narrows her attention until it includes only him. To do this, she very deliberately excludes sleep. The intense, the velvety deep desirability of unbroken sleep is what Dennis senses most strongly whenever he enters this room. In any competition he wages for her against sleep, sleep's going to win. It has only to lap inward from the dark corners of the room to close over her head, and she has only to let herself slide luxuriously under, while what he wants, in wanting to make love, would ask effort of her, and an energy she doesn't have.

"Showing up here with no warning," Francesca says.

"It was weird."

"No wonder you resent it, but what convinced you she can't have Kenny?"

"She's lost the French boyfriend."

Francesca says, "What has that got to do with it, really?"

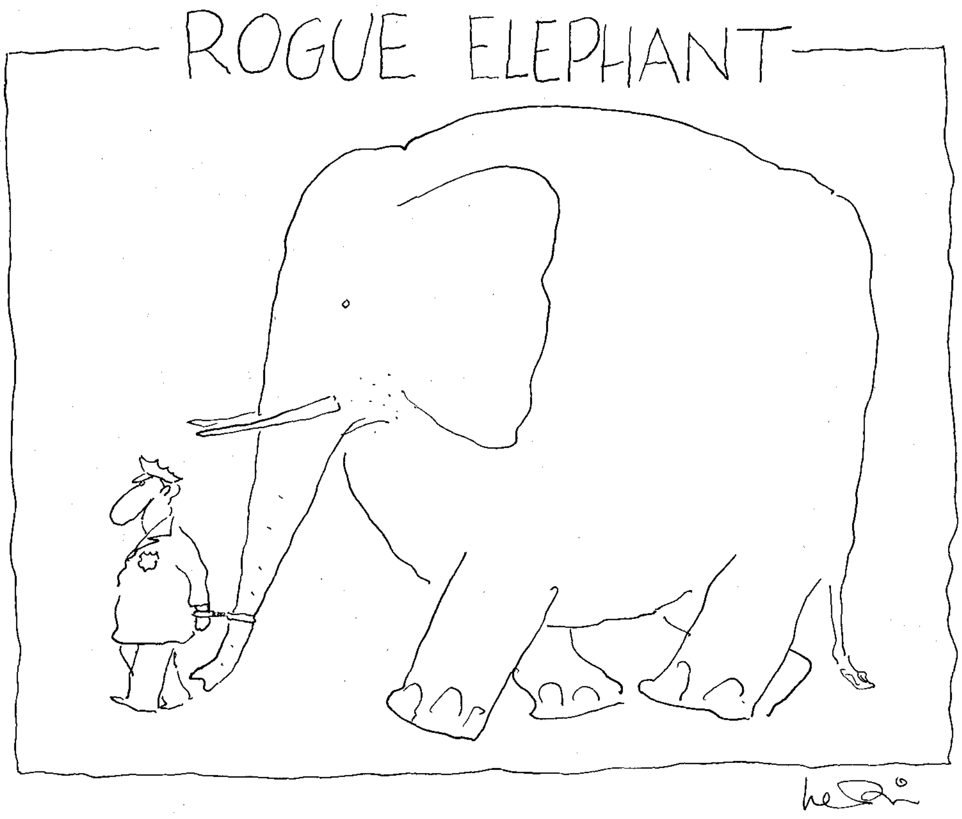
"How many guys does Kenny get to see come and go?"

"In three years there's been George. Not exactly promiscuous."

"Now Kenny has a sister he knows only from pictures."

"The sister was born in Paris," she says reasonably. "Kenny can get to know her here."

He wants Francesca on his side, not mediating between him and Christie. "She kept talking in non sequiturs." He places his hands, palms facing, in the air before her, implying the gaps between what Christie said and what she said next, but Francesca leans forward until his hands slide into a caress of her face, until, with two fingers, he tucks hair behind an ear, and then idly revolves the pearl resting against that ear's lobe, as if he were turning a tiny screw, tightening some connection that had, minutely, loosened.



"What's her baby's name?"

"Emma." He feels strange, saying it.

"I'd hate to see you be so unforgiving toward me," she says.

After a time he tells her thoughtfully, "I couldn't be," but she's asleep, her mouth slightly open, an arm flung out before her, her fingers lightly touching the wall, her entire body relaxed, loose, as lost as if she floated overhead in a Chagall, her nightgown trailing, leaving him and the sleeping babies below, stars around her.

THE next afternoon Kenny comes in, home from somewhere, on his way somewhere else, and is struck enough by his father's expression to say, "You look weird." Dennis, lying back on his son's unmade bed under the portrait of a glitteringly malign Harley-Davidson, squeezing a racquetball in his left hand, answers, "Your mom's back."

Two squeezes of the ball before Kenny risks, "Yeah?" He is careful not to let slip how pleased he is, but in a lilting involuntary movement, younger than he is, he goes up on his toes, his long legs braced, and bounces, one arm holding the other arm at the elbow.

Dennis says, "Yes. Just last week. She was here last night."

"Is that what's wrong with you?"

"What's wrong with me is no sleep and I didn't shave and that makes me feel old." He dents the blue racquetball with his thumb and it oozes back into its sphere as he remembers that when his own father used to say he felt old it was a threat that Dennis suffered with an obscure and embarrassed guilt.

He reads in his son the same stiffening, the same resentment, as Kenny, at his dresser, fidgets a drawer open and shut, and Dennis says to his back, appealing to the cocky set of the shoulders and the vulnerability of the nape exposed by the Leo-like haircut, "Look, I wanted you to know, but I was thinking you could spend the summer here. With us."

"You hate her," Kenny says intensely, talking down into the drawer, and Dennis starts to say, "Kenny, no, that's not right," when Kenny strips off his T-shirt, tearing it over his dark head, its shapely unknowable stubbornness so much like his mother's, and Dennis sees the violent bruise marbling his son's arm. The bruise resolves into a tattoo of a skeleton on a motorcycle, leaning forward as if into wind, black eye sockets, spiked helmet. Death, grinning on the freckled curve of adolescent biceps. Dennis slams the racquetball at the wall. It caroms past Kenny's shoulder. "Dad!" Kenny cries, like a child, and Dennis is up, taking two fast steps, grabbing the arm. Kenny twists away to stand against the wall, cornered.

"My God, it's ugly," Dennis hears the hoarseness of his own voice, the sound of a father's barely controlled anger. "I didn't want to believe it was real. Was this Leo's idea?"

"No, it was mine. Dad, it didn't hurt. The needles were really clean. I watched the guy sterilize them. That's the first thing you see when you walk into his place, this big sterilizer. Dad, it's my body. You would have said no. You know you would have said no."

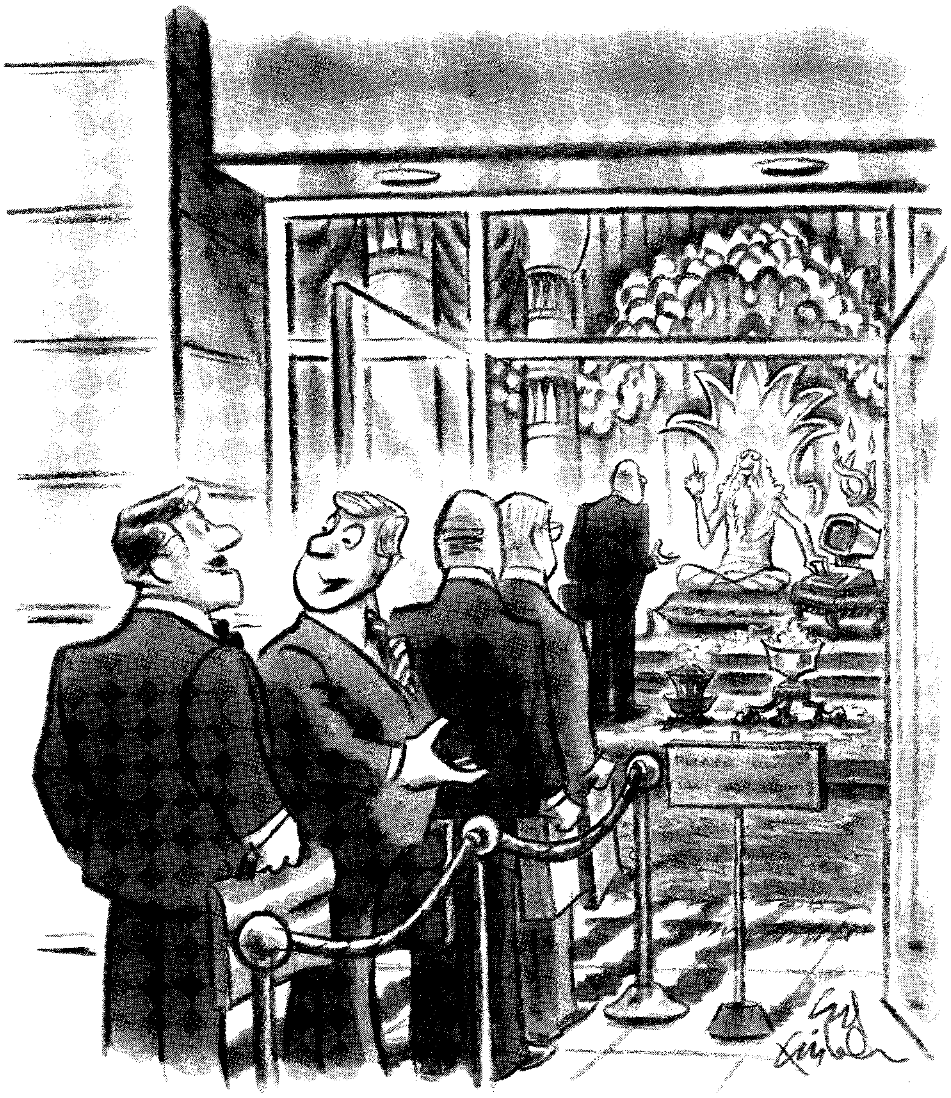
It's my body. Dennis can't believe that. He can't conceive of having no say in what happens to this body, in no longer being needed to protect it. Kenny is five, shuddering in his arms; he has fallen into a doorjamb, slitting open his lower lip, and for some reason Dennis is catching the blood in his hand. Kenny is two, shrieking down at his own bare leg as the needle eases in. The nurse has told Dennis, who wanted to hold Kenny in his lap, facing his chest, that it's better if Kenny sees that it's the nurse who's hurting him. That way Kenny won't come to distrust his own father.

"What does it mean?" Dennis asks.

"It doesn't mean anything. It's just cool."

"You're thirteen years old," Dennis says, "and you'll be living with this the rest of your life."

"I want to live with it." Kenny pulls on a black T-shirt from his drawer, and the tattoo disappears under a sleeve. What he's defensive about, it hits Dennis, is that he does not regret the grinning little leather-jacketed death on its motorcycle. Part of him



"It's great! You just tell him how much pollution your company is responsible for and he tells you how many trees you have to plant to atone for it."

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would like to drum up regret if that's the clue to his father's forgiveness, but the truth is he's now too old to summon emotion on demand, and too honest to fake it, without being insulated enough to fight his father without a fair amount of pain. Dennis catches himself making an abrupt accommodating shift, with this insight, in the direction of understanding his son as someone strictly separate from him. Perhaps the tattoo has accomplished what it was meant to. Perhaps it was meant to be something that couldn't be undone and something he couldn't possibly like about his child. That's it. His adoration has been unconditional. He's made Kenny have to wrestle it off. Something has changed between them, and here Kenny is, watching him covertly for signs that this is over. Over, so that he can go.

"You were so perfect when you were born," Dennis says, and is blindsided by the idea that the only other person who will truly mourn that perfection as he does is Christie. "You're grounded," Dennis says. "You can't leave this house."

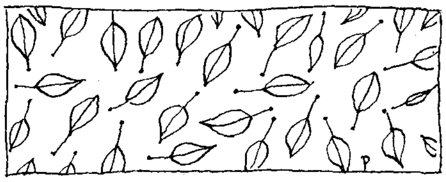
When the phone rings that night, Francesca answers and mouths, "It's her." Dennis shakes his head. Holding Gavin against her shoulder, Francesca mouths, "Come on." He holds his left hand flat in the air, his right vertically below it, a "T." Time out. Francesca, exasperated, has just enough grace to smile at him. She says, "Christie, he must have gone out. I didn't hear him leave. Kenny?" Dennis is shaking his head furiously. "Kenny's out with Leo. Sorry. I'll tell them both you called."

Two nights later, and this time Francesca's side of the conversation is: "He never called you? I gave him your message. I am sorry. His partner's away, so, you know. I'm sure he'll get back to you as soon as he can." Francesca listens a moment before adding, "I *agree* with you this can't go on much longer." When she hangs up, Francesca says, "Did you hear that last part?"

"I need time," he says.

Francesca shakes her head, marvelling at his hard anger, his evasiveness, troubled by how far he's willing to take this. "She's not helpless," Francesca says. "She can always call her lawyer. I think you are in the wrong."

Without her on his side, it begins to strike him as stale, small-minded, increasingly indefensible, and a day later it comes to him that it's time he talked to Christie. Francesca looks up from drawing to kiss him goodbye, relieved at his decision. He leaves his office early to go to Christie's apartment. It's in a stucco complex of separate four-story buildings spaced around culs-de-sac and traffic islands spiked with dying yucca. He knew he should have called her first, but somehow he never got around to it. "You look terrible," people kept telling him all day, and he got tired of his own small joke, "I feel much worse than I look." Well, she surprised him, showing up without warning. Surely she can't be too put off if he does the same. When his knocks go unanswered, he feels around in the dirt under a flourishing white geranium. Christie's houseplants always thrived. She always left a key under one of her plants by the front door, though he'd asked her not to a thousand times. He lets himself in, telling himself he's going to call out to see if she's there after all, but once inside he makes no sound. Stealth, it strikes him, is no light thing, but very physical. He's breathing faster than he likes, as if he'd run two miles along the river road, his heart banging. Her baby's toys lie all around. The bright clutter, for some reason, makes him panicky. In his own house, he would begin picking things up; he'd know how to go about setting things straight. Here he can't. He's stymied by the very fact that he's an intruder. An intruder is an unreasonable thing to be. *You are in the wrong;* maybe more deeply than ever before. Leo's mother could make a capital case out of this. As if with



ROOM AND SUN

When the sun comes directly in this window
I see nothing but dazzle, molecular jazz
that splits the dancing atoms, breaking
the screen, the glass, the wooden frame
down to their original elements in a flare-up
of flashy gas. The big tree outside—
invisible in this pelting and dismembering
brightness, as if its confident solidity
were nothing but a short-lived trick
of the light—reminds me of John Donne
trying to stare his Maker down and
being sandblasted blank by light, his
fort of shreds and patches turning to
cinders in a wink, so absolute that hungering,
unflinching look of love. But when the sun

moves to the side of the house a whole world
comes alive and mobile and discrete
by its crooked light: little green shiverings
of leaf, pine needles in their peaceful rust,
touched-up tips of hemlock, and pages and
pages of scattered brightness on the table
where a fern frond gathers bubbles of light
in water, and a white mug holds my bent
reflection. This oblique illumination lets
things be their limited worldly selves, in
innocence self-centered, adepts of light and shade:
the silent surface of a desk; the waiting patience
worn by turned-down blue sheets; the black stem
balancing a desk lamp; or my own right hand's
twigged shadow as it falls across the page,
this sharp pen piercing it.

—Eamon Grennan

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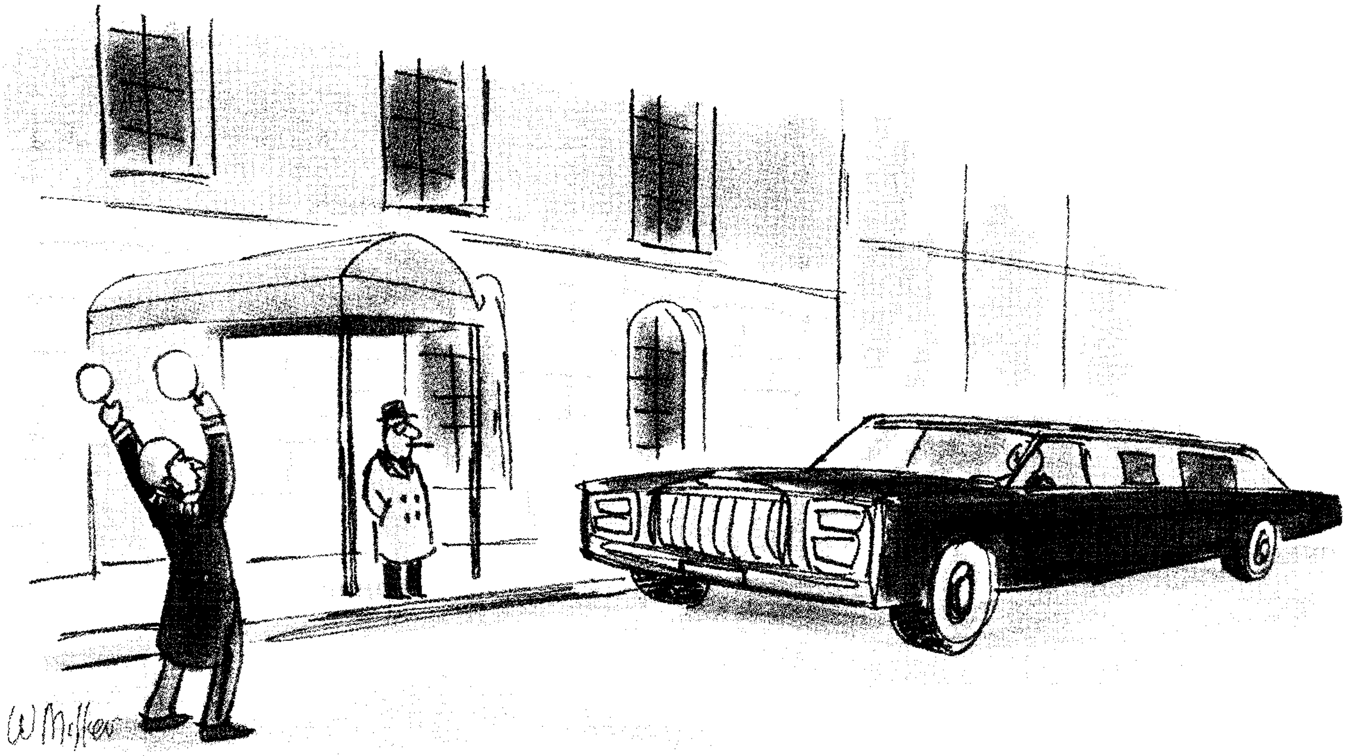

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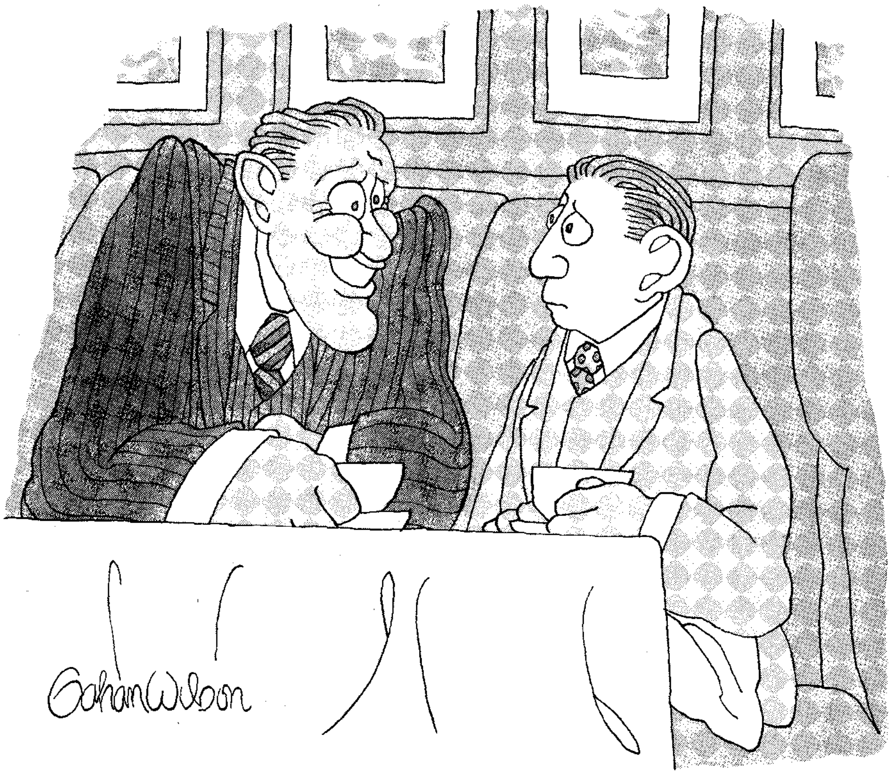
foresight, he dressed for the part. His Levi's have a tear over one knee, and his shabby sneakers, gray with age, let him move lightly, brimming with guilt and yet slightly high on it, through the mess, which seems to him evidence of happiness, her happiness, which he long ago divorced himself from, which he has no right to know anything of. All this, everything he sees, is contraband. A jack-in-the-box has been left as it was, sprung open, the vacantly grinning head hanging upside down from the long caterpillarlike sleeve of the body, and here is a naked doll seated in a chair, and on the couch *Vanity Fair* open to a picture of Kevin Costner, leaning back, shirt loose, glass in hand. Dennis feels scathingly appraised by Kevin Costner.

On the far side of a narrow counter is the kitchen, furnished in paint-splattered furniture she must have got at the Salvation Army. Four straight-backed chairs are dashed with brilliant blue, while the small table is a scarred palette of yellow, turquoise, hot pink, and silver. It looks as if an Abstract Expressionist went insane here. There are crumbs of burned toast in the high chair's tray and a smear of apricot jam. The floor is fifties linoleum, tan tiles with faint white cirrus drifting across them, and on one tile Christie—or someone—has painted a tiny airplane. She has been using "The Frugal Gourmet," which is propped open by her mother's (he remembers) tin recipe box. In the refrigerator, nothing much—milk, bread, juice, the usual, and a half-empty bottle of Beaujolais with the cork floating in the wine. She never handled corkscrews well. Peanut butter. Garlic, fat cloves in mauve-white paper. He takes the garlic out—garlic's not supposed to go in the refrigerator—but, holding the crisp little weight, he doesn't know what to do with it. If he leaves it out, she's going to know someone was here. There's nothing to do but put it back. He does.

Emma's room, sunny and dishevelled, the crib against a wall on which hangs a small Amish quilt, its corners frayed, a powdery-pleasant baby smell and folded clothes in wire drawers under a changing table. A basket of teething rings. A kazoo. A child's rocker. Balled up in the crib, a pair of baby tights and a striped sock. A second small bedroom, darker, shades down, must be meant for Kenny. There's something wonderful in being in this room, and he's still high on his amazed apprehension of his own wrongdoing, floating on it, willing to stay with it a little longer now that he's come this far. His hearing feels hyperacute, but there's nothing, no sound, and his sense of what he's seeing seems magnificently, magically clear. He would never have known any of this. She could never have told him. If she'd wanted to tell him, he wouldn't have listened. Here are things she thinks Kenny will like: a cowboy bedspread, a glaring African mask, an aquarium filled with water, oxygen percolating through it, no fish yet but some kind of seaweed hypnotically weaving, and, clinging to the glass, small snails black as capers. A desk fashioned from a sheet of melanite laid over sawhorses. A bright-blue dresser. The drawers, when he opens them, are empty, except that the last drawer contains a Hershey's Kiss.

As he sits heavily on the bed, his exhilaration dies. It doesn't so much desert him in a rush as evaporate, and a befuddling gray fatigue fogs over the vacuum it leaves in him. This stupid midafternoon sleepiness feels entirely ordinary. He lies back on the bed and puts an arm over his face, breathing in the smell of himself—slightly sweaty, salty guilt. Still no sound; it feels good. He even feels he's in the right place.

He dreams a dream he thinks of later as intended for Kenny. Kenny should have dreamed it; by accidentally falling asleep in this bed, Dennis got it. In it,



"So I guess it comes down to whether it's you or me, and I guess it's me."

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Christie is younger, Kenny barely old enough to work a scissors, the two of them sitting on the floor with their dark heads together, cutting animals from brilliant paper, the air between them charged with great, disinterested tenderness, not talking. The animals they cut out come alive. A monkey jumps to his knee, and Kenny giggles. Christie sets a blue giraffe down on the floor and it canters stiffly away. Waking, Dennis's first thought is that he's dreamed a dream he wasn't in. He can't remember ever having had such a dream before. In some subtle shift in the room's shadows, he reads a new degree of lateness, of sheer wrongness in being here, and his body responds with a rising rush of adrenaline, but he still doesn't move. He wonders if what he really wants is to get caught. In another minute he's able to tell himself, *That would really be the height of stupidity*, and sit up. His body hates his refusal to get moving. He shakes his head to clear the last of the sleep from it, but the mysterious peacefulness of the dream still has a hold on him. What he's seen won't let go so easily.

Back through the apartment, each thing in its place, everything exactly as he found it, it begins to appear to him that he's getting away with this. He lets himself out and finds it is later than he thought, probably six-thirty or so. When he checks the parking lot two stories down, she's not there: her dark-rimmed glasses aren't aimed upward in stunned accusation, and though he fumbles, locking the door, her Volvo does not materialize. He twitches geranium leaves out of the way, sliding the key back where she likes it.

This is not happiness, just a gaudy physiological response to not getting caught—light head, hands shaking, legs he has to will steady to get himself down the stairs, world that looks entirely strange.

"I THOUGHT I couldn't leave the house until I was thirty-two," Kenny says, his feet on the dash, looking around the maze of stucco buildings he's never seen before.

"You can't," Dennis says. "The one place you can come is here. I want you to call me for your ride home. No taking off. No improvising."

"But I can stay the weekend."

"You can stay the weekend if you want."

"Why?"

"I was wrong before," Dennis says. "I was just wrong."

"But how did you see you were wrong?"

"You don't get to know all the details."

"Does Mom?"

"I haven't talked to her."

"You mean she doesn't know I'm coming?"

"She's home. There's her car, right?"

"I don't like surprising her," Kenny says quietly.

"O.K. You really don't like it, we turn around, we drive home, we get on the phone, we arrange this for some other time. Is that how you want to do this?"

He hesitates, and then says, as quietly, "I guess so." Dennis starts the car; maybe this was a bad idea, but he'd liked the feel of it. He'd wanted to change things all at once. He'd wanted the suddenness of the reversal on his side in convincing Christie that things were going to be different from now on, and he hadn't guessed that it might be Kenny who didn't like the idea, who seemed unprepared for it.

"Stop," Kenny says, removing his feet from the dash, sitting up. "I'm going. O.K.?"

"Whatever you want to do."

"I'll call you."

"Call."

He's gone. He's on the stairs, bag on his shoulder, lighter-footed than his father can remember ever being, taking the two flights of stairs as if they were nothing. Then Christie is at the door in black jeans, a man's T-shirt huge on her, her son taller than she is. That she's amazed is clear in every line of her body. She and Kenny don't step nearer or embrace. They just stand talking, and then Dennis sees Christie move to her porch rail, looking down at him bewildered, and he waves at her, a wave that means *I can't explain it.* —ELIZABETH TALLENT

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THE NEW ARMY

[*William Fowler in Defence*]

The Volunteer Army (VOLAR) system which was introduced in the early 1970s has worked out its teething troubles and the Army now attracts intelligent, well-motivated men and women.

ANNALS OF JUSTICE

IRAN-CONTRA

IT has been three years since the first news of the Iran-Contra affair broke, and still the story is incomplete. New documents and new details continue to make their way into the public domain, now in scraps, now in volumes. The trial of Oliver North filled in several pieces of the vast puzzle. Yet by this time the public has grown weary; the audience drifts away. Every investigation, from that of the Attorney General to that of the Tower Commission to that of the congressional Iran-Contra committees, has raised expectations of an end to the story, and disappointed them. The North trial is but the latest in the series. A year ago, or even six months ago, it seemed by far the most promising from a dramatic point of view. North was, after all, the linchpin in the two covert operations, and a major figure whose story might make some sense of the whole bizarre scandal. Having sung the dramatic lead at the Iran-Contra hearings, he could fairly be expected to continue in the role of the heldentenor and, in the end, leap through a ring of fire or bring down all of Valhalla in glorious musical flames. Instead, there was another anticlimax. At his trial, North played a mere mortal and left the stage tarnished and tacky. Now the story will go on without him, at the trials of John Poindexter, Richard Secord, and Albert Hakim.

The fact is that it was wrong to expect that the North trial would provide any dramatic ending. Unlike Watergate, the Iran-Contra affair has always been a modernist drama in its unfolding. The central narrative has always been undermined by the appearance of new subplots, new themes, and new characters. Even the subplots are rarely completed—at least, not within the classical dramatic unities. A story begins in one place—as in the Tower Commission report—and stops dead. Then it takes up when least expected in the testimony of someone who belongs to another story. As in a novel by Alain Robbe-Grillet, events have been shuffled and sequences lost. A name dropped in a newly released document may provide the answer to a riddle that you once longed to know the answer to but have now forgotten. The lawyers in each investigation questioned people for different purposes, so new stories are written on top of the old ones.

And there will be no end, for the Iran-Contra affair, as a modernist piece, has no single agent of causality, and has infinite ramifications. As in Einstein's universe, the simple, old-fashioned questions cannot be answered directly, and the most serious questions have jokes for answers. The central issue has always seemed to be whether or not President Ronald Reagan authorized the diversion of funds to the Contras from the Iran arms sales. Yet even if Rear Admiral Poindexter produced a document showing that the President had approved the diversion the question of responsibility would remain unsettled and—given Reagan's uncertain relation to the decision-making process—open to endless scholastic exegesis.

Ever since Attorney General Edwin Meese revealed the diversion, in November of 1986, many observers have speculated that the diversion was itself a diversion: not from some deeper secret but from all the other issues of the Iran-Contra affair—all the other breaches of law and all the other culpable participants. Possibly so. Certainly with each successive investigation the scope of the affair has widened. What once seemed to be a small, dark conspiracy among staff members of the National Security Council now appears to have been a vast, amorphous enterprise, involving, to one degree or another, dozens upon dozens of people throughout the national-security bureaucracy. Yet the more the affair expands, the less weight it seems to have, since there is progressively less that anyone can do about it. The Iran-Contra committees could hardly get through the scheduled hearings, much less follow up all the new leads they uncovered—or all the new people who lied to them. They lacked the political support to do it. Then, when they dropped the matter, the

It's not a pain, exactly – more a sort of nagging throb.
I had that last year! Skeletal deossification.
I have this persistent ringing in the roof of my mouth. The doctor says —
Oh, what do they know? My late Uncle Charlie had such a stupid diagnosis from one of those bums...
Handelsman

Dial 123-SICK and Reach Out to Your Fellow-Hypochondriacs circumference of responsibility widened again, this time to include Congress and the public at large.

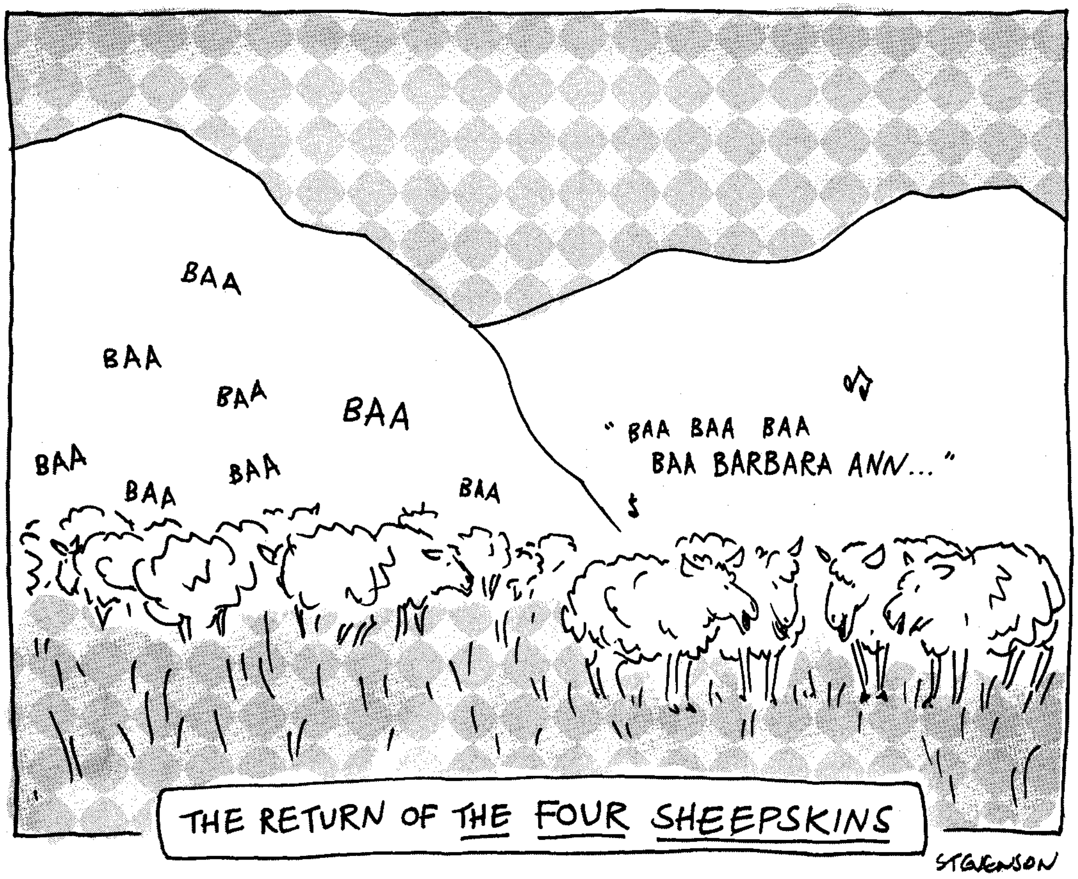
Those who criticized the Iran-Contra committees for failing to get to the bottom of the affair looked to the independent counsel, Lawrence Walsh, for remedy. Not surprisingly, however, the independent counsel's office ran into somewhat similar difficulties. To prosecute any participant—below the level of the Presidency—Walsh and his team had to single him out from among the dozens of others and then extricate the particular actions or decisions he could be held responsible for. The central figures were the hardest to prosecute, because they knew the most about the involvement of others and, in their own defense, could threaten to expose all the plots and subplots leading off into the farthest reaches of the affair. The central figures had to come first, yet prosecuting them has taken so much time, energy, and money that Walsh may never get to the others. The North case presented extraordinary difficulties, for North had participated in a web of covert operations, including some that, though authorized and legal, crisscrossed the boundaries of the Iran-Contra affair.

In this regard, the North trial raised an issue of much larger dimensions than the guilt or innocence of Oliver North; that is, how, in principle, it is possible to prosecute high officials for crimes involving national security. In the realm of the law, the trial was as much a trial of the powers of the independent counsel as it was a trial of North himself. Specifically, it was a test of congressional legislation that had been passed to facilitate the prosecution of federal crimes committed by high government officials: on the one hand, the statute providing for an independent prosecutor outside the Attorney General's office and, on the other hand, the Classified Information Procedures Act.

The second law, CIPA, was passed, in 1980, for the purpose of preventing "graymail"—the practice whereby defendants threaten to reveal important state secrets in the course of a trial and so force the government to drop its case. In federal criminal trials, the government, under CIPA, has the right, before a trial begins, to review classified material that the court has deemed relevant to the case, so that the prosecution can, if necessary, drop or trim its charges and proceed without fear of surprises. Under CIPA, the Attorney General makes the final determination on what classified information can be disclosed for the case, the congressional reasoning being that, given his dual role, he is in the best position to weigh the interests of national security against those of justice. As a high Administration official, he is bound to protect important state secrets; as prosecutor and an officer of the law, he is bound to do battle with the national-security agencies, which are normally reluctant to reveal any classified information at all.

The CIPA law was designed to deal with espionage cases and the like, not with cases such as that of Oliver North. In spy trials, the government can usually frame its case so that relatively little classified information is involved. In the North case as it was originally framed—it included one count of conspiracy and one of theft concerning the diversion of funds from one covert operation to another—there were potentially thousands of classified documents at issue. Then, too, when a case is brought by an independent counsel, the dual role of the Attorney General is sundered: the prosecutor cannot control what is declassified, and the Attorney General cannot control the trial process. In principle, a clear conflict arises in cases where an independent counsel must prosecute a high official from the Administration to which the Attorney General belongs. (An even clearer conflict would arise if he had to prosecute the Attorney General himself.) The North trial provides an example of how this might occur.

Addressing the problem of classified information, Judge Gerhard Gesell, of the Federal District Court in Washington, D.C., issued a series of pretrial rulings that effectively fenced off, as irrelevant to the case, a great deal of documentary material that the defense had requested. Remaining categories of information from



THE RETURN OF THE FOUR SHEEPSKINS

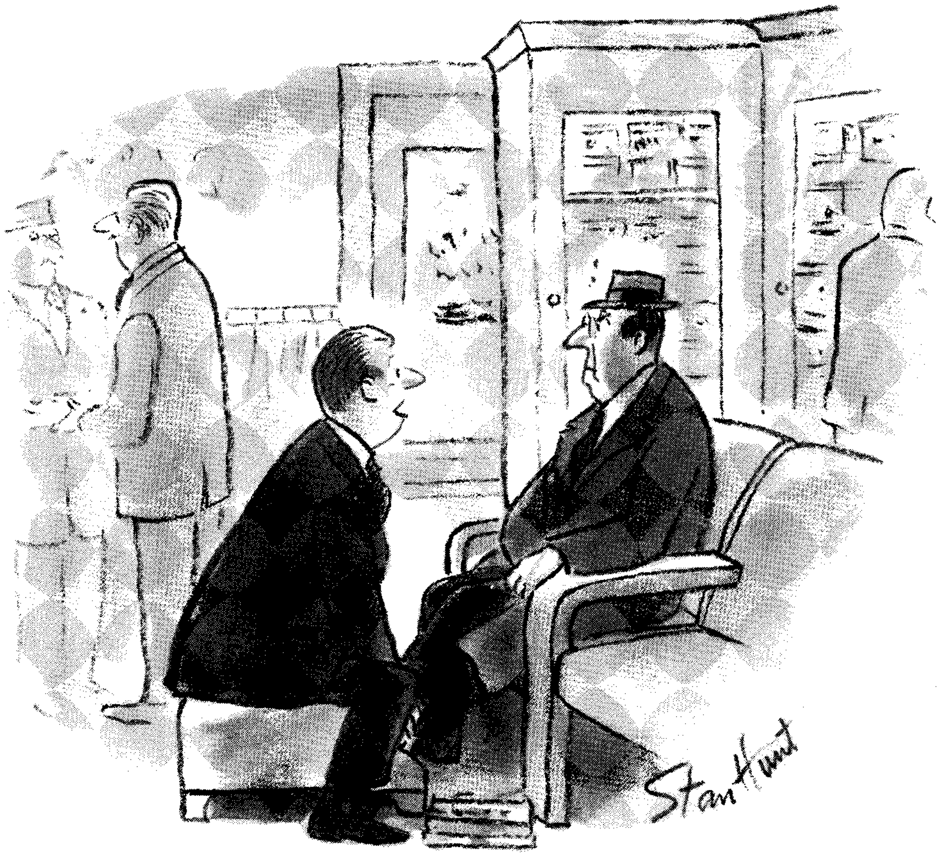
which defense requests for the disclosure of classified material would come were given over to the Attorney General's office. The judge said, however, that he would deal with most CIPA issues as they came up, rather than in advance, explaining that the normal procedures would not work in this case and that he could not agree to provide a script for the whole trial.

As for the problem of conflict of interest, it was merely fortuitous that Richard Thornburgh had replaced Edwin Meese as Attorney General by the time Lawrence Walsh was ready to go to court last fall. Thornburgh submitted the defense requests for the disclosure of classified information to a review panel composed of the heads of the various national-security agencies involved. The agency heads, in turn, passed the requests along to their subordinates and counsels. What this meant was that the disclosure requests went to Reagan Administration officials, some of whom had been in office during the period of the Iran-Contra affair, and some of whom may have generated and classified the information in the first place. Since Thornburgh accepted their recommendations, these officials effectively controlled what could and could not be put into evidence. At the end of this process, there was such a gap between what the defense required and what the review panel allowed that Walsh had to drop the two main charges against North. Recently, for the same reason, he has had to drop parallel conspiracy and theft charges against Poindexter and Secord. This means that no government official will be tried for the crime that lies at the very center of the Iran-Contra affair. Quite possibly, the diversion of funds from the Iran arms sales to the Secord enterprise was too deeply enmeshed with national-security secrets to be tried under any circumstances. But we will never know. Even if politics weren't involved, the prospect would be bleak, for the implication is that if national-security officials commit crimes that are important enough they cannot be tried for them. And if they commit only important crimes they cannot be tried at all.

As it was, of course, twelve charges remained against North: nine charges of lying to Congress and otherwise obstructing justice; a charge of tax fraud in connection with the funneling of military aid to the Contras through a nonprofit organization; a charge of illegal conversion of traveller's checks for personal use; and a charge of receiving an illegal gratuity in the form of a security system for the North household. Yet, peripheral as these charges might seem to matters of national security, the case very nearly did not come to trial—much less to a verdict—because of the CIPA problems still involved. Because of Gesell's refusal to follow the CIPA procedures to the letter, and rule entirely in advance, document by document, the Attorney General went to court on the day the jury was to have been sworn in to demand that any time North's lawyers sought to introduce classified information that had not gone through the review process, the judge stop the trial and notify the Justice Department. The move was a direct challenge to the independent counsel's right to try the case. It was only because Walsh succeeded in negotiating a compromise over the CIPA procedures to be used that the Justice Department allowed the trial to go forward. The battles over information went on throughout the trial, and continue now in the case of a C.I.A. official involved in the Iran-Contra affair. The House Intelligence Committee has taken note of Walsh's difficulties, and is now reviewing the CIPA law.

As the North trial proceeded, it became clear that some of the classified information that the Justice Department was threatening to stop the trial to protect—what became known as "the drop-dead list"—had appeared in the press at one time or another. Such information as the names of some of the third countries that had contributed to the Contras was classified even though it was not secret. Other items on the drop-dead list turned out to be entirely trivial. A week into the trial, the lawyers fought for a whole afternoon over the name of a former Costa Rican official. A private research library, the National Security Archive, immediately turned up the fact that the name had been revealed in a civil lawsuit a few months before. Clearly, the Attorney General had allowed the bureaucratic tropism of the State Department and other agencies to go unchecked.

Then, interestingly, the Justice Department released some of the material



"Why, that's amazing, sir—you have feet of clay."

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that it had at first put off limits, such as the names of countries, and grew more flexible about defense requests for the release of information. Possibly, the Attorney General and his staff had initially been worried about the willingness of Walsh's office to guard against defense disclosure of government secrets and had become more confident about this as the trial proceeded. Possibly, as time went on, their interest in the case increased—to the point where they were willing to conduct their own review of the material and to wrest what they could from the national-security agencies. Possibly both. Legal historians will have to note, however, that a new Administration was inaugurated just as the trial began. In all likelihood, that had nothing to do with the Justice Department's change of heart, for Thornburgh and his staff remained in office. All the same, the coincidence illustrates the trickiness of the problems involved in trying high officials for crimes involving national security.

That the case came to trial at all is a testament to the experience and the skill of Walsh and of Judge Gesell. Then, the fact that the trial went all the way to verdict was a triumph for Walsh's prosecuting attorneys, John Keker, Michael Bromwich, and David Zornow. Because of all the drop-dead material that the defense still possessed, the prosecutors had to fight two separate contests at the same time and in the same space. While questioning witnesses for the purpose of making their argument, they had to negotiate an obstacle course invisible to the jury: an evidentiary minefield in which one wrong move would allow the defense to blow the case out of court. What was more, they could not use the immunized testimony that North had given the Iran-Contra committees; indeed, in order not to taint their case, they had had to remain completely ignorant of it. For the attorneys, this had meant a strange two years of not listening to radio or television news, of having their newspapers redacted for them, and of not listening to any conversation about the Iran-Contra affair. Then, too, they faced jurors who, as a condition of their service, knew virtually nothing about the Iran-Contra affair. There was therefore little chance that any of the jurors knew very much about foreign policy or the workings of national-security agencies, either. In practice, the jurors turned out to be a group of hardworking people, few of whom had had the time to watch the Iran-Contra hearings, and who, as black middle-income or low-income Washingtonians, had probably contended with so much violence in their own neighborhoods that it tended to obscure the conflict in Nicaragua.

The North trial was thus on one level a normal courtroom contest, in which the opposing lawyers presented two different versions of events. On another level, it was in itself a modernist drama, for no two groups in the courtroom had the same pool of information at their disposal. The jurors knew only what they heard. The prosecuting attorneys possessed a great deal of secret information they could not reveal or use, but they did not know certain things that the reporters covering the trial knew. Before the trial, they did not know, for example, that North had destroyed his ledgers with all the money transactions in them. The defense lawyers, Brendan Sullivan and his team, did not know everything that the prosecution did, but they knew what North knew, and they produced documents that neither the Iran-Contra committees nor the prosecutors had ever seen before.

For spectators, the visible courtroom contest was absorbing in itself. Walsh had chosen as lead prosecutor John Keker, a star criminal-defense and business-litigation attorney from California, who, with his law partner, had written a book on the examination of witnesses. A graduate of Yale Law School, Keker had clerked for Chief Justice Earl Warren after Warren left the Supreme Court, and had served as a federal public defender before going into private practice. Keker, who was forty-five years old—or about the same age as North—had, like North, served in the Marines in Vietnam in the sixties and, like North, had been wounded leading an infantry platoon into combat. Examining witnesses, he was fast and aggressive, and as poised as an athlete. Nothing about his task was easy, but perhaps the most difficult part of it lay in the examination of his own witnesses, for most of them were, of necessity, either members of Secord's Contra operation or Reagan Administration officials who had in one way or another been involved in the Iran-Contra affair. Most were loath to see North convicted, and under cross-questioning by Brendan Sullivan most of them proved to be character witnesses for North.

On the stand, Fawn Hall, North's former secretary; Lieutenant Colonel Robert Earl, his deputy; Robert Owen, his trusted courier; and many other figures in the Iran-Contra hearings gave testimonials to North's hard work, dedication, and patriotism. This testimony turned out to weigh with the jury. After the trial, one juror, for example, said he remembered Adolfo Calero, the Contra leader, testifying that he would like to raise a statue to North. As for North's superiors—against whom he had presumably sinned—these witnesses became evasive when they were asked to assign any blame to him. Meese said that North was under "no legal compulsion" to answer

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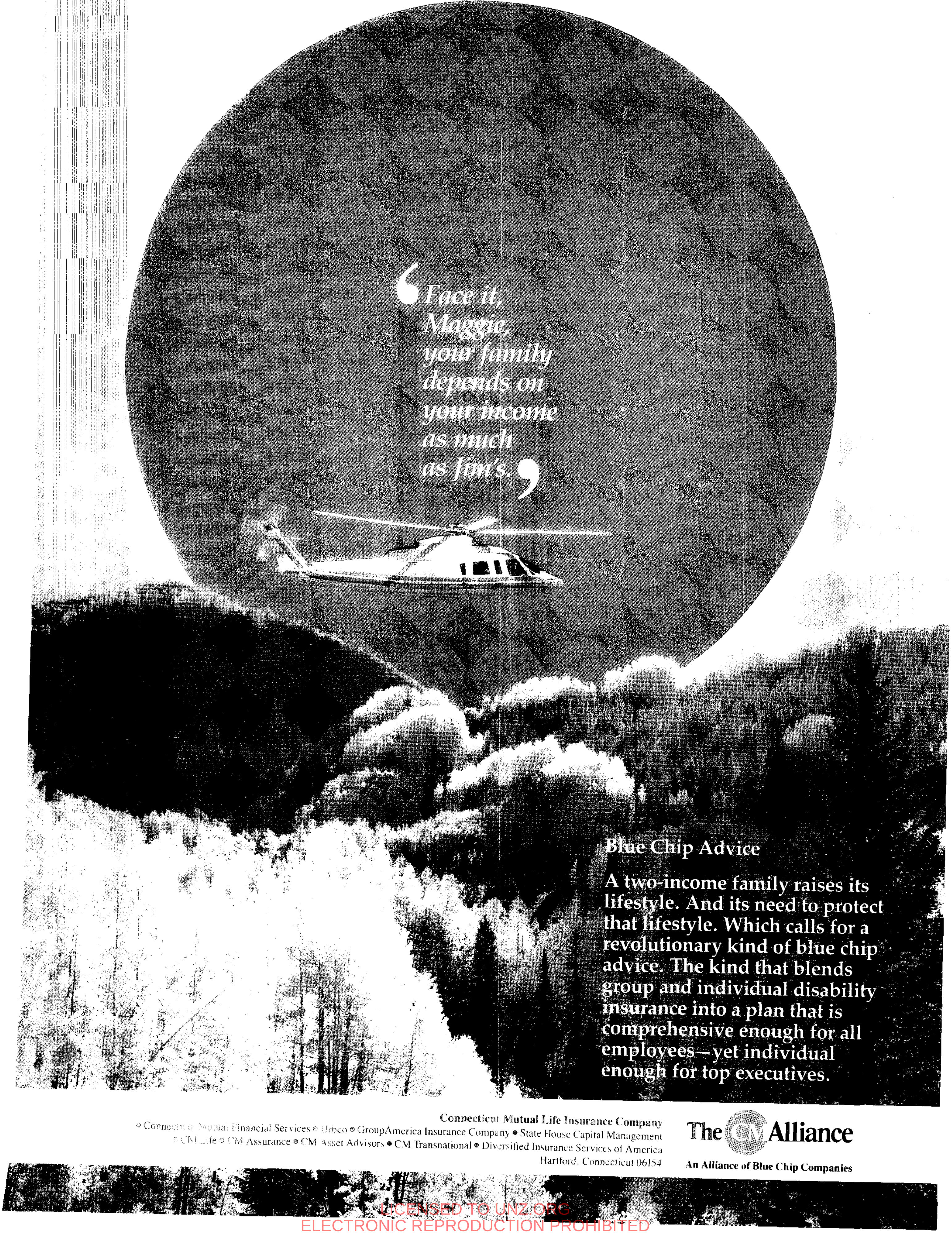

Blue Chip Advice

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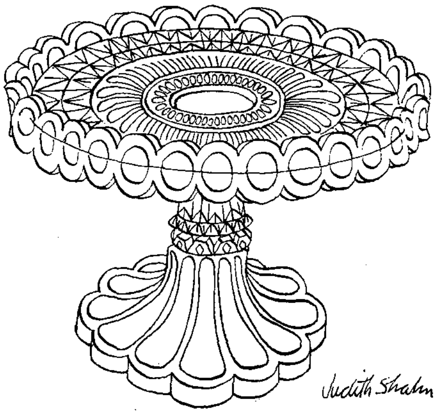
when Meese and other Justice Department lawyers interviewed him at the Justice Department about the diversion of funds. Robert McFarlane, Reagan's national-security adviser, became almost incoherent on the stand. He had previously pleaded guilty to four charges of withholding information from Congress, but those were misdemeanors—not felonies, such as North was charged with. McFarlane had once said that North was like a son to him. Unwilling now to blame North, yet unwilling to take responsibility for the lies that North had concocted for him to tell Congress, he gave testimony that Judge Gesell thought so "equivocal and confusing" that it "could not be probative of much."

The underlying problem was that so many government officials—both defense witnesses and prosecution witnesses—spoke out on North's behalf that for the prosecution to make its case it had to convince the jurors that the United States government was filled with people who at least condoned criminal activity. Then, too, because the legality of the diversion of funds was not at issue, Keker could not point out that a great deal of the money North handled was siphoned off by middlemen and never got to the "freedom fighters" at all.

What Keker and the prosecution team had going for them was excellent evidence—most of it in the form of documents—that North had done just about everything he was charged with in the way of overt acts. There was plenty of evidence to show that North had made false statements to Congress, or had provided the information for McFarlane to make them, on three occasions in 1985. Other evidence showed that North had made false statements to the Attorney General; that he had altered, destroyed, and removed N.S.C. documents; that he had helped provide military aid for the Contras through tax-exempt organizations in the United States; and that he had allowed Richard Secord to pay for a security system for his house and had tried to cover up his own failure to pay for it by composing phony, backdated letters. Most of the facts of the case were not in dispute, and when Sullivan took the risky decision to put North on the stand North had to admit to them. Then, once North was on the stand, Keker introduced new evidence, suggesting that North had made no clear distinction between government funds and his own petty cash.

According to the N.S.C. administrator who handled expense accounts, North was chronically short of cash for taxis, gasoline, and other small expenses until the middle of 1985—until the time that Secord took over the Contra accounts. After that, North had plenty of cash on hand. Indeed, in October of 1985 he bought a car, putting down five thousand dollars in cash and paying the balance, of three thousand dollars, in cash a few days later. On the stand, North explained that he had a steel box in his closet containing a cash fund for the family. He had begun this fund with an insurance settlement in 1964, he said, and had been putting the change in his pockets in it every Friday ever since. By the end of 1985, he said, there was fifteen thousand dollars in cash in the box. But no, he did not know how much cash was in it now. The story not only seemed unlikely—the Norths had bank accounts, after all—but also failed to explain why he had bought the car with two separate cash payments. The prosecutors showed that he had stopped off at Secord's office after making the first payment. All in all, a very fishy smell was coming from North by the time Keker finished with him.

Sullivan's decision to put North on the stand seemed to some at the time a desperate act. But by then the trial rested on the question of intent. Sullivan's strategy was to show that North was a loyal foot soldier who had made some mistakes but had followed orders and had been turned into a scapegoat by his superiors. And who could persuade a jury of this better than North himself? In his civilian clothes, North appeared small and slight—much smaller and slighter than Keker—and on the stand he looked up at the judge and up at the jury. He spoke softly and modestly. Sometimes, under Keker's rapid-fire questioning, he became petulant and quibbled over words in a way that suggested a close reading of the law. Most of the time, he seemed less stoical than pathetic—the habitual catch in his throat suggesting that he might at any moment break into tears.



Over Keker's objection, North was allowed to give the famous briefing he used to give right-wing private donors on the plight of the "freedom fighters" and the Communist threat to the Americas. In this rendition, the United States seemed to be as vulnerable as he himself appeared on the stand. The Soviet Union threatened America's control of the Caribbean. Cuba had diesel submarines more effective than Hitler's at the beginning of the Second World War and the largest intelligence complex in the Western Hemisphere. Nicaragua had an army large enough to overwhelm the combined forces of all its neighbors; it was building an airstrip twelve hundred and eighty feet long, which would be "the largest airfield south of the Rio Grande River and north of Argentina"; its tanks waited "on the main attack corridor into Honduras," clearly poised for invasion. "As an infantry officer, a person in the military, I can tell you that there is never a situation where you deploy armor as a defensive measure," North said. Slides accompanied the briefing, and the last one showed a grave with a simple wooden cross over it. The resistance fighters, North said, were the only soldiers in Nicaragua who were buried with a cross over them.

Virtually every statement North made in the briefing was either factually inaccurate or wildly misleading. (North could not have got out of officer training believing that tanks could not be used defensively.) Yet such was his attitude of sincerity and quiet concern that it was hard not to be drawn into his invented world.

Later in his testimony, North admitted that he had knowingly made false statements to Congress, and that he had altered, shredded, and removed N.S.C. documents. But he had done all this in the service of his country, he said, and under authorization from his superiors; he knew that it was wrong to lie, but he did not know that it was a crime. He was, after all, only a poor lieutenant colonel, a mere "pawn in a chess game played by giants." (Keker

THE FINEST ACCOMMODATIONS IN ACAPULCO ARE NOT IN ACAPULCO.

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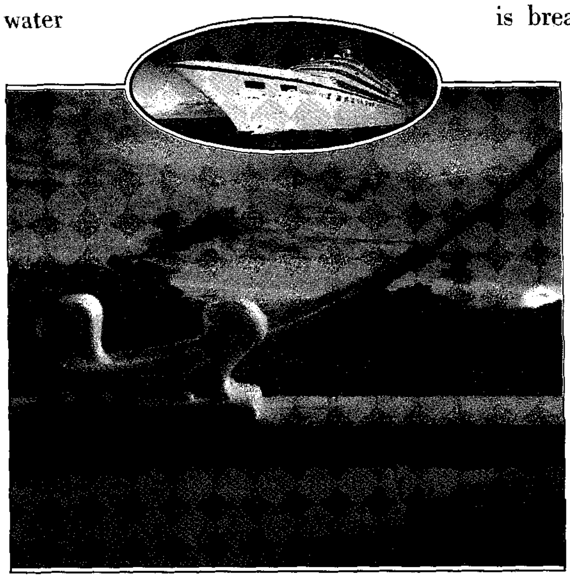

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asked if in the fall of 1986 he still considered McFarlane a giant, but the irony seems to have been lost on the jury.) He admitted that he had accepted the security system from Secord and had tried to conceal the fact that he had not paid for it; that, he said, was "one of the dumber things" he had ever done.

The jury found North guilty on three of the twelve counts: the charge that he received an illegal gratuity (the security system) and two charges of obstruction of justice having to do with the alteration, destruction, and removal of documents in November of 1986. Those jurors who later spoke to reporters made it clear that they and the others had largely accepted North's version of events. They even believed his story of the metal box. Some thought he was a good man; some thought that, as one put it, he was neither "all that bad" nor "all that good"; but all thought that he had been made a scapegoat by and for his superiors. "He wasn't the boss," Denise Anderson, the jury foreman, said. "Basically, on the counts of 'not guilty,' he was following orders. And there were a lot of people's orders. I think Reagan should stand up and give an accounting for what he did. . . . I think he knew a lot about what was going on."

Judge Gesell had denied Sullivan's motion to compel Ronald Reagan to appear as a defense witness, on the ground that there was no trail of evidence suggesting that Reagan had ordered North to commit the specific violations he was being tried for. In a sense, however, it was a pity that Reagan did not have to appear, for if he had appeared the jury would have had to choose between two great portrayals of aggrieved innocence.

The television reporters at the courthouse on the day the jury announced its verdict found the choices the jury had made among the nine charges of obstruction of justice inexplicable. In the reporters' well-informed opinion, some of the other obstruction charges had been far more clearly etched by the prosecution. The following day, the jurors explained that they had convicted North of those things which he seemed to have done for his personal benefit—such as removing documents from the N.S.C. for his own protection—rather than in the service of his superiors. There was, in other words, a moral logic to what the jurors decided. And, if one believed the polls, it was a logic that many, if not most, Americans thought appropriate to the case. It was not, however, the logic that Judge Gesell had ordered them to follow. In his instructions he had warned the jurors not to concern themselves with others who might have committed crimes, because some of those had pleaded guilty, some were awaiting trial, some had been given immunity for testifying, and some were dead. He said that they should not draw the notion of authorization broadly; authorization, he said, "requires clear, direct instructions to act at a given time in a given way." But even *acting* on orders would not excuse a crime, he said, for "neither the President nor any of the defendant's superiors had the legal authority to order anyone to violate the law." Many of the jurors, however, held low-level civil-service, clerical, and technical jobs, and they put North in their position. How, one juror asked, could a secretary be held responsible for a letter her boss had her type? Their view of the matter was wholly understandable. Yet by ignoring the judge's instructions they failed to consider the principle of individual responsibility for crimes committed under orders or in the name of the state. This, as Keker pointed out in his closing argument, was the principle of Nuremberg.

To some degree, the verdict reflected North and Sullivan's success in producing evidence to show that a great many people in government knew a great deal about North's activities. Given the particular charges against North, most of the evidence had to do with the Central American side of the affair—the solicitation of third-country support for the Contras, and the delivery of military aid and intelligence. New evidence that the defense brought forward alters somewhat the picture of the Contra affair that emerged from the Iran-Contra hearings. For one thing, it shows that the President and other members of the National Security Council put considerable time and energy into evading the congressional restrictions on Contra aid.

The Iran-Contra hearings had left some doubt about the role played by William Casey, the director of the C.I.A. North had testified that Casey had given him a good many of his instructions, but Casey died May 6,

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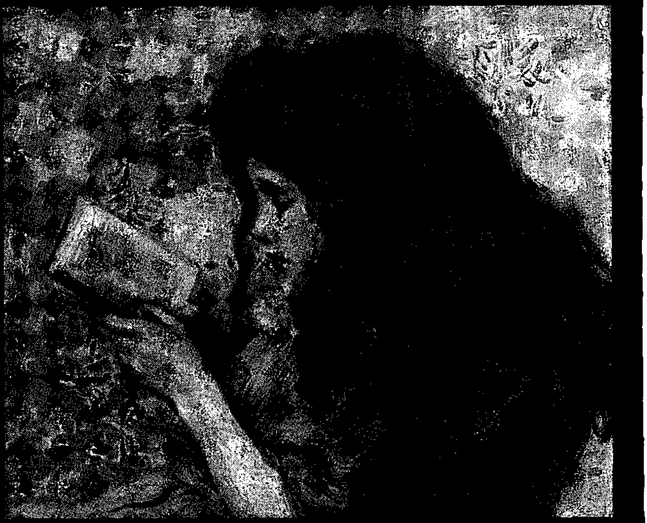

Federigo Zandomeneghi, *A Young Girl Reading*, signed, oil on canvas, 15¼ x 18¼ in. Estimate: $150,000–250,000

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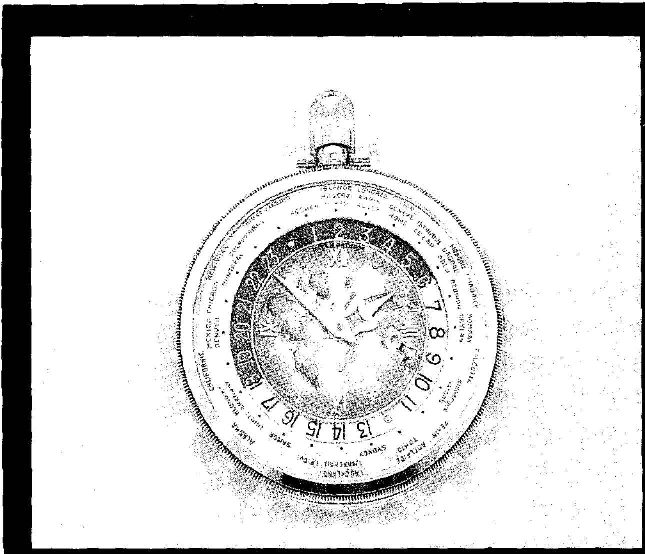

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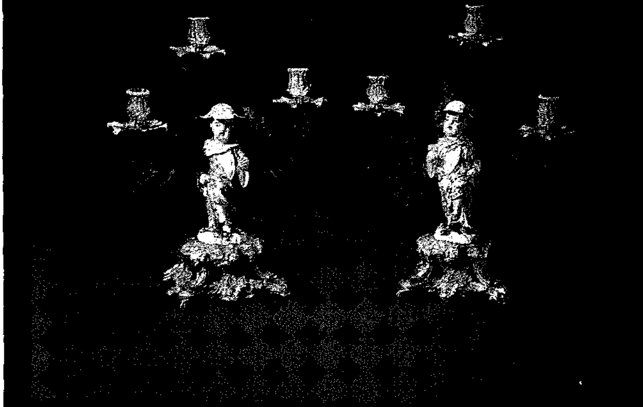

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1987, and in many instances there was no corroborating evidence. At the trial, however, the Justice Department released a document stipulating that for the purposes of the trial certain facts were true. One of the facts was that in 1983, and again in 1984, Casey obtained through the Defense Department at virtually no cost several hundred tons of infantry weapons that the Israelis had confiscated from Palestine Liberation Organization forces. The C.I.A. reported both transactions to Congress (they were known as Operations Tipped Kettle and Tipped Kettle II) but did not say that most of the weapons would be going to the Contras, and thus made it possible for the C.I.A. to evade the congressional ceiling on Contra aid.

That was not out of character for Casey. The Contras were, after all, largely his creation. The C.I.A. had begun financing and training the guerrillas in late 1981, and when they proved incapable of performing the tasks he envisioned for them he sent C.I.A. agents or UCLAs—"unilaterally controlled Latino assets," in intelligence jargon—to do the job. Then, too, Casey had never been entirely meticulous about giving the congressional intelligence-oversight committees the information that the law required. For example, he did not spell out the fact that it was his UCLAs who in January and February of 1984 mined three Nicaraguan harbors and damaged several foreign ships. His neglect in this instance precipitated the whole Contra affair, for when the operation was exposed, in April, Senators Barry Goldwater and Daniel Patrick Moynihan flew into high dudgeon. In June, Congress refused to appropriate supplemental aid to the Contras, and in October it passed the Boland amendment to an omnibus funding bill for fiscal year 1985, prohibiting the Defense Department, the C.I.A., and all other American agencies involved in intelligence from expending any funds, directly or indirectly, for military or paramilitary operations in Nicaragua.

That April, McFarlane, probably with Casey's approbation, sent a National Security Council staff member to ask Israel if its government would consent to finance the Contras while the Administration faced a "temporary shortfall." The Israelis refused, not wishing to damage their relations with Congress. At around the same time, Casey—according to one of the former C.I.A. officials who appeared as witnesses for the defense—convened a meeting in his office which included Adolfo Calero and Oliver North. Speaking on behalf of the President, Casey said that he wanted to assure the resistance leadership that the United States government would find a way to support the resistance even if the Boland amendment passed, and that Colonel North would be the point of reference. During the weeks that followed, Duane (Dewey) Clarridge, who was then the chief of the C.I.A.'s Central American Task Force, arranged further meetings between North and Calero, and in May he accompanied North on a trip to Honduras to present him to the Contra commanders.

North testified before the Iran-Contra committees that it was Casey who suggested Richard Secord to him, in the fall of 1984, as the man to buy arms for the Contras. Evidence produced at the trial made the Casey-Secord connection clearer. According to the stip-

A suite at L'Ermitage Hotel as interpreted by Lowell Nesbitt, Los Angeles.
L. Nesbitt '89

ulation document, Secord had negotiated with an Israeli major general for the first shipment of P.L.O. arms in February of 1983. Secord was at the time a major general in the Air Force and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. A specialist in covert air operations and in arms procurement, he had spent a good deal of his career in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East. In May of 1983, he retired under a considerable cloud after it was discovered that he had had dealings with the C.I.A. renegade Edwin Wilson, who had been convicted that February of shipping terrorist weapons to Libya. Wilson's secretary said that Secord was a silent partner, with Wilson and Tom Clines, another former C.I.A. official, in a company that made huge profits by overcharging on the shipping of American arms to Egypt. That he was a partner in the company was never proved, but, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, he had helped to arrange the deal. Then, too, during the same period Wilson had lent him his airplane and had bought him out of a bad real-estate investment that Clines had sold him.

On the stand, North testified that Casey told him in 1984 that bringing Secord into the Contra-resupply operation "would be a good way to rehabilitate him": an old cloak-and-dagger phrase that, when said with a smile, meant its precise opposite. North also brought Secord into the Iran arms deals during the messy Hawk-missile transaction of November, 1985. Casey knew this immediately, because North had the Iran operation, beginning with the Hawk deal, tracked by National Security Agency intercepts—that is, surveillance reports. In 1986, those intercepts, addressed to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and the assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as well as to Casey, showed anyone who knew the actual cost that North or his intermediaries were marking up the price of the arms sold to Iran. Since the C.I.A. was not receiving the profit, Casey had evidence of a diversion of funds for the Contras. On the other end, he knew that Secord was providing the Contras with arms. At the trial, Sullivan produced proof that North and Casey had frequent contact in 1985 and 1986. It is therefore extremely difficult now to doubt North's testimony that Casey knew all about the Secord enterprise.

At the trial, Norman Gardner, a former C.I.A. official, described a bizarre evening he spent with Casey on November 19, 1986—less than a month before Casey was felled by a cerebral seizure. The Contra operation had been exposed, and the future of the policy was uncertain. But Casey had just gone off on a madcap two-day trip to Central America. (He reported to the President that he had found the guerrillas "in high spirits and ready to go.") Because Casey was to testify to the Intelligence Committees of Congress on November 21st about the Hawk deal, Gardner flew to Central America with the briefing papers, and flew back with Casey on a military cargo plane. In his compartment on the plane, Casey set aside the draft testimony Gardner had brought him and began composing a draft of his own, in longhand. His handwriting was virtually illegible, so after a while he decided to look for his tape recorder. It was not in his briefcase, so he and Gardner went to the cargo hold to pull

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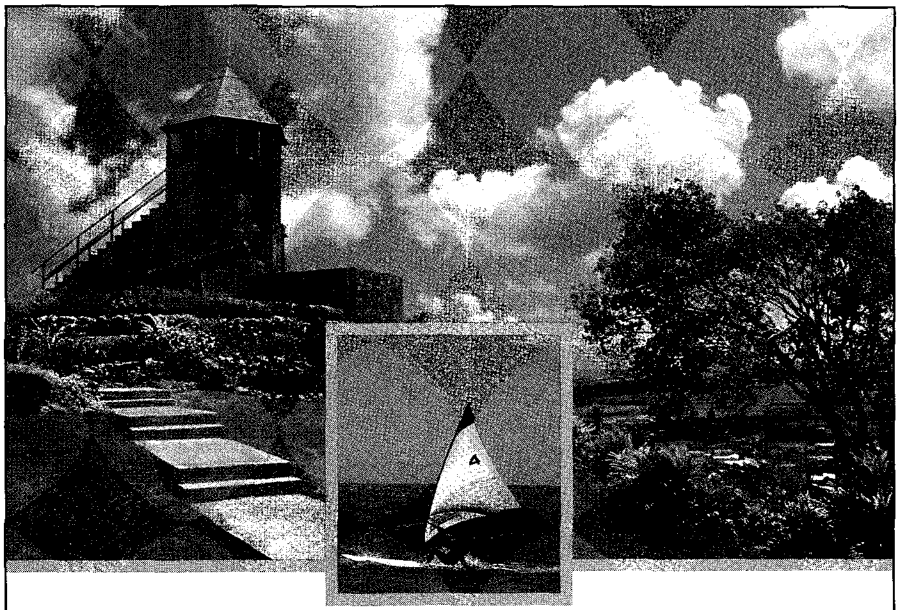
out his suitcase. They pulled, and all the bags fell down around them. Back in his compartment, Casey opened the bag and dumped all his clothes on the floor—but still no tape recorder. It turned out that one of the security guards had it. Through the night, Casey dictated the lies he would tell the Intelligence Committees the next day.

The trial produced no evidence that President Reagan knew about the diversion of funds, but it did show that he knew a good deal more about the secret assistance to the Contras than had been previously revealed. Nicaragua, it seems, was one of the few foreign-policy issues that attracted the attention of Ronald Reagan, and, in fact, it engrossed him. "The President put probably more time into this issue than any other issue on his foreign-policy agenda, '82, '83, '84," McFarlane told the North jury. When Reagan was questioned by the Tower Commission in January of 1987, he said he did not know that the N.S.C. staff was secretly helping the Contras between 1984 and 1986. But a few months later, just after McFarlane testified to the Iran-Contra committees, Reagan told the press, "I was very definitely involved in the decisions about support to the freedom fighters. It was my idea to begin with." Under Keker's examination, McFarlane said, "We had discussions, the President and I and his other senior advisers, often in the spring and summer of 1984, and the President was at the same time speaking publicly about his own support for the freedom fighters. . . . He let us know very clearly . . . that we were to do all that we could to make sure that the movement, the freedom fighters, survived."

In March of 1984, McFarlane went to the Saudi Ambassador in Washington with a request for funds, and in July the Saudis began depositing a million dollars a month in Adolfo Calero's bank account. At the trial, McFarlane said that before he saw the Saudi Ambassador he had discussed with the President the idea of going to other countries for money, and that he had informed the President when the Saudis agreed. He said that his action was perfectly legal, because it was taken before the Boland amendment was passed. Here McFarlane was making an interesting distinction: in his view, North's solicitation of funds after October violated the Boland amendment, for, as he saw it, the amendment



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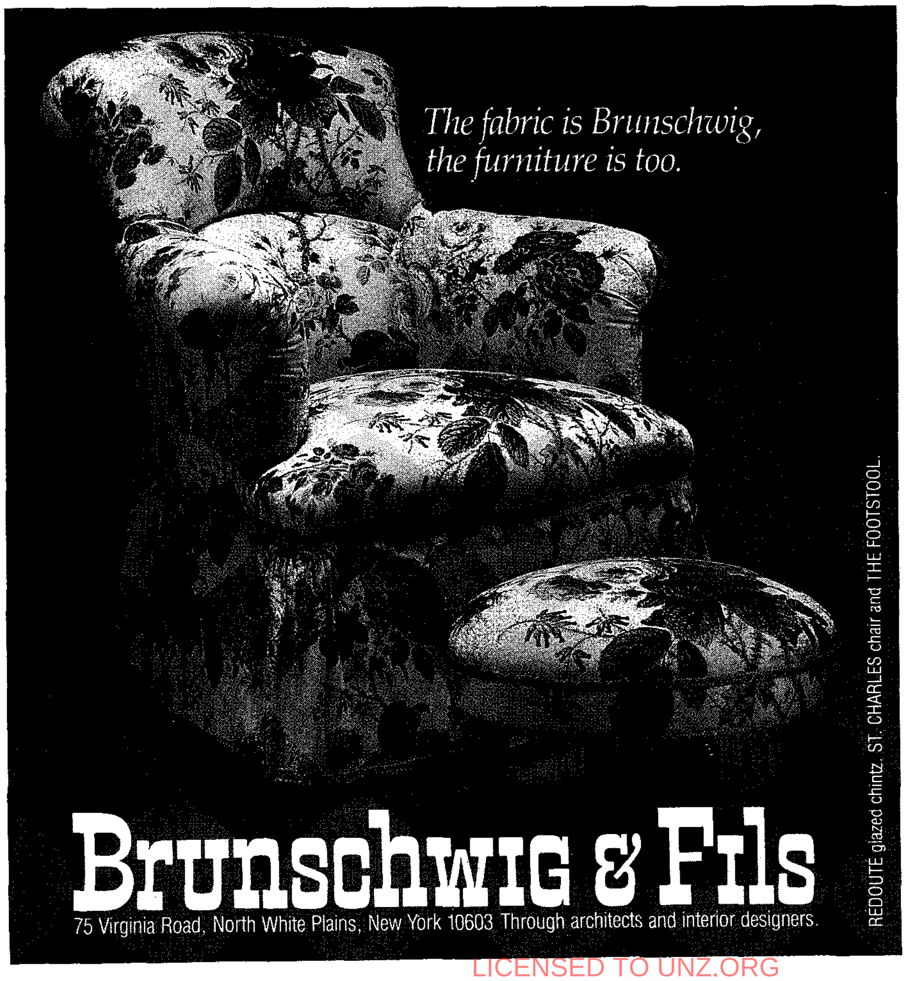
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applied to N.S.C. staff members. In practice, however, it was President Reagan who made much the most effective solicitation after Boland: following his meeting with the King of Saudi Arabia in February of 1985, the Saudis stepped up their deposits to Calero's account to two million dollars a month. But then, McFarlane said to the Iran-Contra committees, the President "had a far more liberal interpretation" of Boland "than I did."

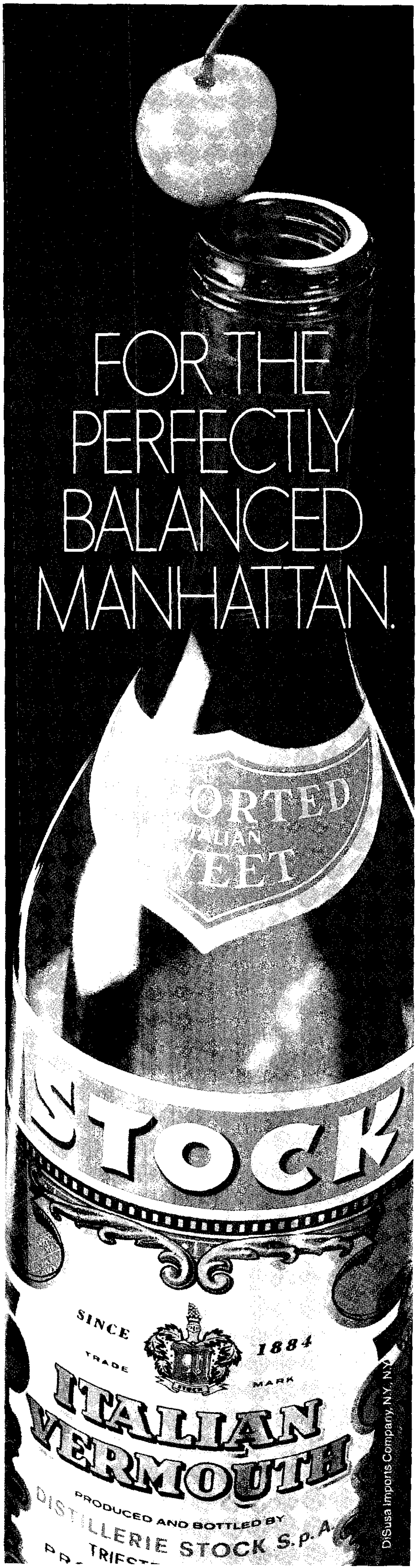
The President apparently had a more liberal view of the tax laws as well, for, according to McFarlane, he once or twice suggested that a foundation be set up to channel private money to the Contras for military supplies as well as food and medicine. Presumably, McFarlane told him that such a thing would be illegal, for the foundation was never set up. However, the nonprofit National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty, which had been set up, by Carl (Spitz) Channell, to raise money to advance conservative foreign-policy goals, did just what the President envisioned, and Reagan had numerous meetings with the private donors to the N.E.P.L., some of whom gave only in order to provide military supplies. There is no evidence that Reagan knew they were giving money for weapons; on the other hand, the possibility would clearly not have disturbed him, since it was his idea to begin with.

Where the Contras were concerned, Reagan appears to have led a far busier life in the White House than he has generally been given credit for. Just in the matter of solicitations, he spoke with the Saudi King, he spoke with private donors, and he spoke with the Costa Rican Security Minister, who was protecting the existence of a resupply airstrip on the Nicaraguan border which had been built by Secord. He also spent a good deal of time pleading with the President of Honduras on behalf of the Contras. He may even have talked to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to ask her to authorize the transfer of some of Britain's Blowpipe surface-to-air missiles to the Contras. What is more, he acted in a more manipulative fashion than most people thought him capable of.

Among the documents produced at the trial were the minutes of a National Security Planning Group meeting that took place on June 25, 1984. The subject of the meeting was Nicaragua, and the main topic was negotiations with the Sandinistas—or, rather, how the Administration had to appear to be negotiating in order to get congressional support for Contra aid. As the President had worked it out for himself: "If we are just talking about negotiations with Nicaragua, that is so far-fetched to imagine that a Communist government like that would make any reasonable deal with us, but if it is to get the Congress to support the anti-Sandinistas, then that can be helpful."

Toward the end of the meeting, there was an argument about the legality of soliciting money from third countries. Secretary of State George Shultz quoted James Baker, then the White House chief of staff (he was not present at the meeting), as having said that trying to get money from other countries would be "an impeachable offense." Casey replied that it was perfectly legal if the intelligence-oversight committees were informed. (That was apparently something on his mind.) Defense Secretary Weinberger said that it was perfectly legal, period, since the United States would not be spending any money. (That was Reagan's view.) Edwin Meese, then the deputy chief of staff, said that if they were to request the opinion of the Justice Department, as Shultz had suggested, they should do so in the form of a request to find a legal basis for the United States to solicit third-country support. "You have to give lawyers guidance when asking them a question," he explained. At the end of the discussion, Vice-President Bush, making his first contribution to the meeting, said that such a solicitation would be legal as long as it was not a matter of American funds' passing through a government—and there was no quid pro quo involved. Bush seemed to be the only one who knew the law. In his summary, McFarlane proposed that there be no authority for anyone to seek third-country support until the Justice Department gave a legal opinion, and that the very discussion of it should be kept behind closed doors. President Reagan then added, "If such a story gets out, we'll all be hanging by our thumbs in front of the White House until we find out who did it."

It is not clear whether Reagan thought that the trouble would be legal or purely political, but he knew that



"I should warn you. Men are animals, and I'm no exception."

• •

there would be trouble and that someone would have to be blamed. Not surprisingly, he did not tell the assembled company that McFarlane on his behalf had already solicited funds from Saudi Arabia. Later, the word got out, but only to those who would have approved of it—to Casey, who may have known in any case, and Weinberger, but not to Shultz. There must also have been rumors of this solicitation floating around right-wing circles, for eight months later, at a meeting of the members of the House Intelligence Committee, Representative Henry Hyde asked McFarlane why he didn't raise money for the Contras from Saudi Arabia and Taiwan—a curious choice, except that Saudi Arabia was already contributing large sums, and Taiwan was about to do so.

Admiral Poindexter told the Iran-Contra committees that the President had known in some general way about North's role in supporting the Contras, but that N.S.C. staff members had never gone into any detail except on one occasion, when he himself briefed the President on the construction of the resupply airstrip near the Costa Rican border. The President, he said, forgot about that later. At the trial, however, the defense produced a memo from North to McFarlane with the words "President approved" in Poindexter's handwriting and with Poindexter's initials at the bottom. In this memo, dated October 30, 1985, North asked McFarlane to get the President's approval for U-2 and other surveillance flights to obtain intelligence on arms deliveries to the Sandinistas. At the end of it, he wrote, "You should also tell the President that we intend to airdrop this intelligence to two Resistance units deployed along the Rio Escondido, along with two Honduran-provided 106 recoilless rifles which will be used to sink one or both of the arms carriers."

The memo suggests, of course, that, far from being removed or insulated from the secret operations, Reagan was told in interminable detail about the efforts his staff was making on behalf of the Contras. Possibly the President and his staff did not see Boland as a sharp dividing line. On the one hand, there was the President's "liberal view" of Boland; on the other hand, there was the fact that, because of the political problems involved, Administration activities on behalf of the Contras had always had a penumbra of secrecy about them.

At the trial, the defense produced a section of the minutes of a National Security Planning Group meeting held on September 11, 1984—one month before the Boland amendment was passed. The discussion centered on the question of what to do about five L-39 military jets that, according to intelligence, were on their way by ship from Bulgaria to Nicaragua for the Sandinistas. Casey discussed at some length the attack plans made by the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.)—Calero's troops, based in Honduras, as opposed to the ragtag guerrillas of the southern front, along the Costa Rican border. The F.D.N. commanders, he reported, believed that "the most feasible option" was to attack the aircraft while they were still in their crates, at the port of El Bluff or en route from the port to Managua. The commanders were considering strafing the boats or the transport convoy with their three Cessna airplanes, he said, or ambushing the convoy with their ground forces. The operation, he concluded, was "a very 'iffy' thing"; still, in his view the C.I.A. should provide the F.D.N. with intelligence and operational guidance, since it would be blamed for doing so in any case. A few moments later, Reagan asked, "How would the F.D.N. take them out?" Casey repeated himself. Secretary Weinberger and United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick then suggested that a public outcry be raised about the arrival of the military jets. Reagan demurred, because his last speech about military deliveries to the Sandinistas had had little public impact. "After the F.D.N. acts, we can

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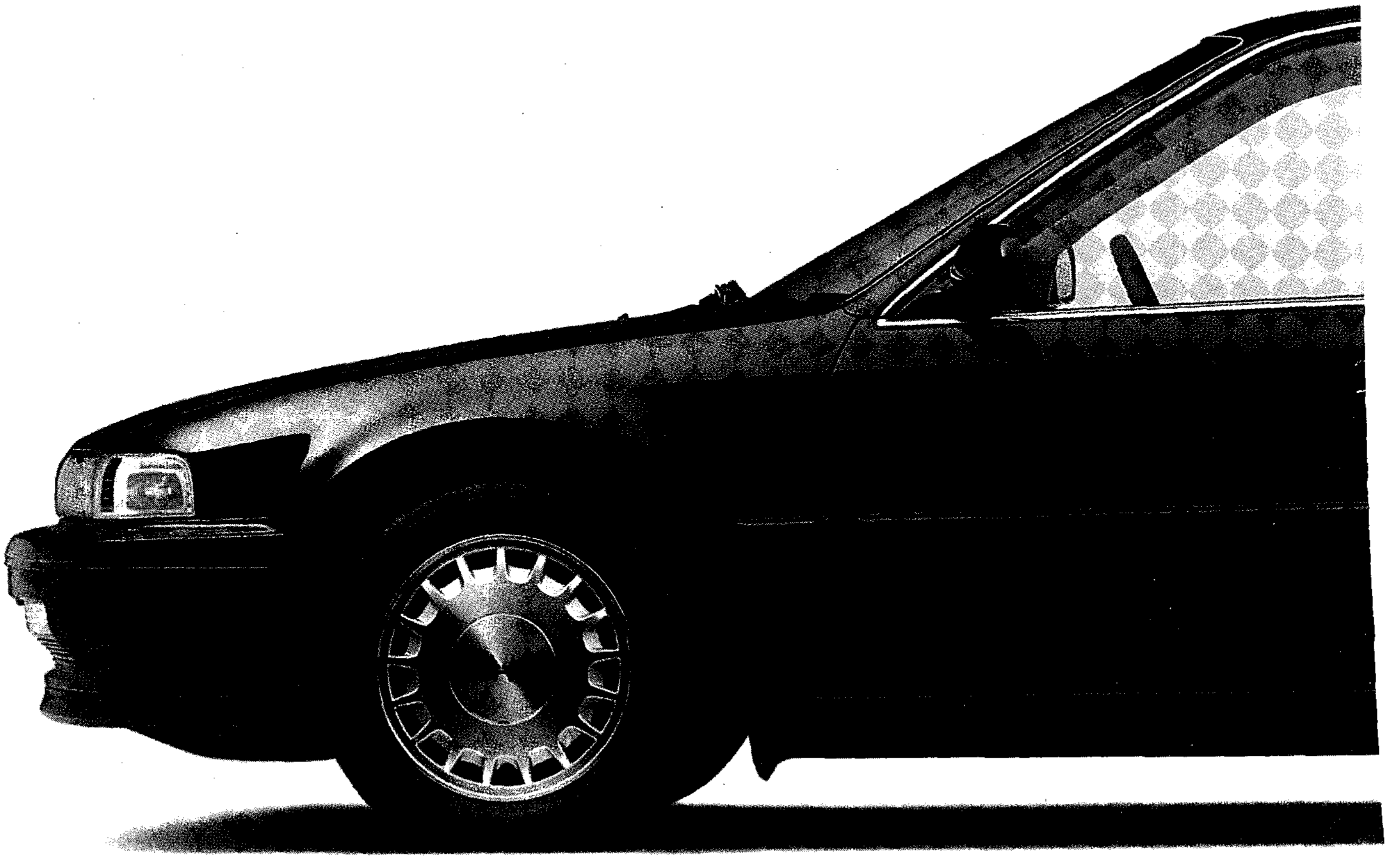

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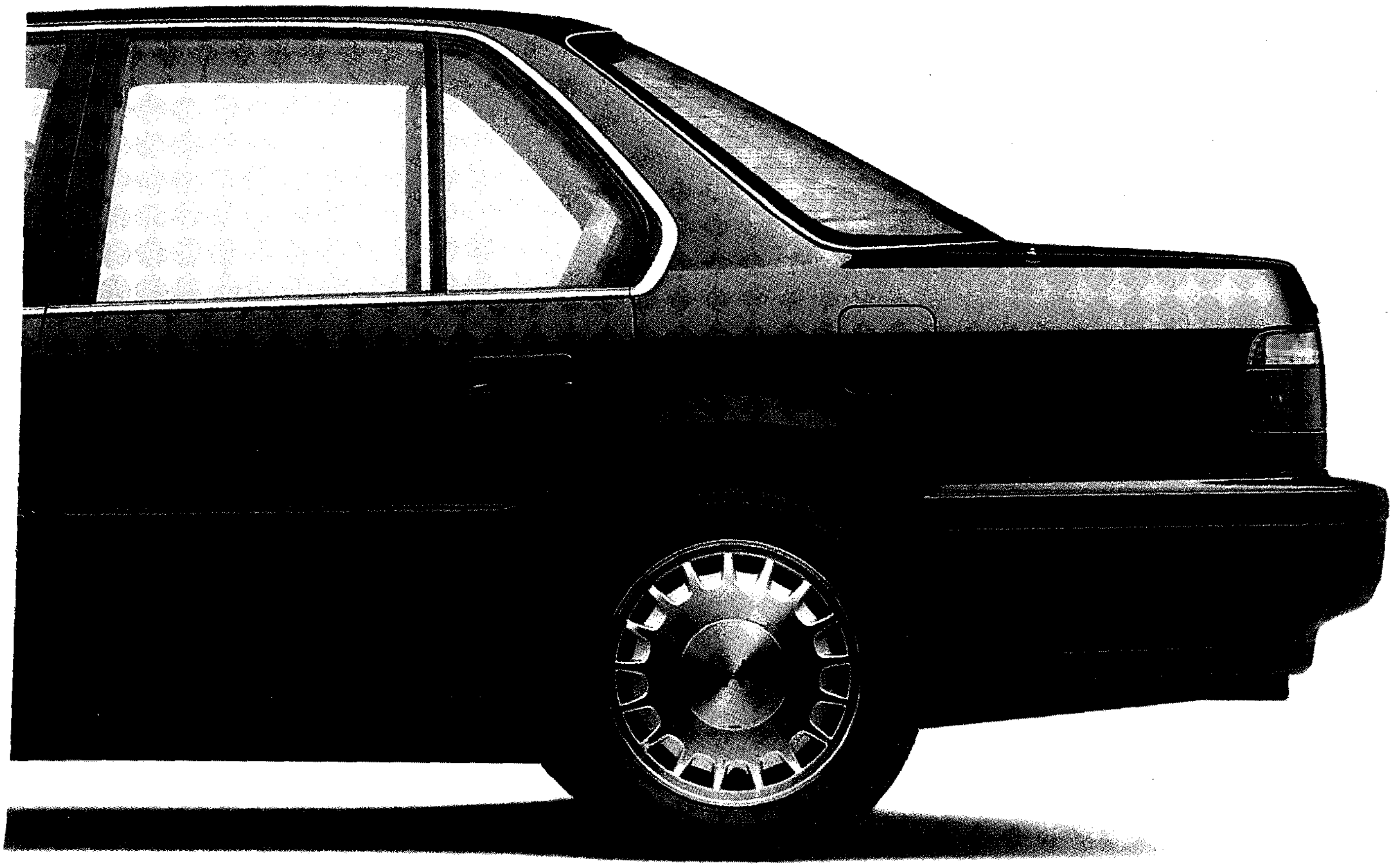

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raise it with the public and the press," he said. James Baker added what was surely on the President's mind—that now was the worst time to try to arouse public opinion over Central America. (It was two months before the Presidential election.) In the end, McFarlane summarized the discussion by saying that the C.I.A. would provide the F.D.N. with the necessary intelligence, and that the heads of the oversight committees would be told about the arriving aircraft but not about any operation by the F.D.N.

As it happened, this risky little decision need never have been made. The whole meeting was based on faulty intelligence. The L-39s never arrived—possibly because they were not bound for Nicaragua to begin with. (The Sandinistas were never given military jets.) Moreover, if they had arrived the F.D.N. could have done nothing about them, because it lacked the military capability. North found this out a few months later—after a shipment of Czech HIND helicopters arrived in Nicaragua—for Calero had to admit as much. North hired David Walker, a British mercenary, to destroy the HINDs. Walker failed to get the job done, however; and on a subsequent mission for North, to blow up a Sandinista arsenal, he and his team managed to set fire to a military hospital as well, injuring not only soldiers but women and infants in the maternity ward. Walker was a poor substitute for the UCLAs. But nothing North did ever worked out very well—a fact that was not disclosed to the jurors, or to Reagan, for that matter.

To listen to North talk and to read the memos he sent to McFarlane, the jurors would have had to conclude that North did a splendid job for the Contras and that they grew mighty under his tutelage. On the stand and in the memos, North described a scene of total disarray at the F.D.N. base camps when the C.I.A. moved out, in the fall of 1984. The Contras had no staffing and no logistical capabilities, and thus no food, medicine, or bullets. They also seemed to have no idea how to fight a guerrilla war. Much of this was true. The C.I.A. had supplied the Contra camps and provided the F.D.N. commanders with an entire superstructure of logistics, communications, and intelligence. Take this superstructure away and what was left was an old-fashioned Central American guerrilla army—a loose coalition of *comandantes* with their peasant troops. Yet some of the Contras were operating far inside Nicaragua and living off the land, as guerrillas are supposed to do.

In the spring of 1985, nine months after North took over responsibility for the Contras, he sent McFarlane a dazzling progress report: the F.D.N. had nearly doubled its personnel—from ninety-five hundred to sixteen thousand—and, with the money it possessed, would reach a strength of twenty-five thousand by midsummer. Its commanders had responded well to guidance on how to build a staff and how to conduct guerrilla warfare; included was a list of close to seventy successful operations, in which the Contras had killed an impressive number of Sandinista troops.

The F.D.N. commanders later said that 1985 was the worst year they had ever had. According to a cable from John Negroponte, the United States Ambassador to Honduras, half of the Contra forces were based in Honduras by early spring. There were morale problems following the cutoff of American aid. Also, in early 1985, the Sandinistas, having completed a major military reorganization, went on the offensive in the northern provinces. Their campaign, which included the resettlement of whole villages from the contested areas, was so successful that the Contra supporters in those provinces were forced to flee into Honduras. Thus the number of Contras in Honduras increased, but the actual strength of the F.D.N. diminished. In any case, North wildly exaggerated their numbers—unless by "personnel" he meant family members and refugees as well as fighters. Was North writing himself a good report card or was he actually deceiving himself?

A more subtle answer was suggested at the trial, first by North's own "briefing" and then in testimony given by Fawn Hall and Glenn Robinette, a former C.I.A. officer, who, on Secord's instructions, had installed the security system for North's house. Hall and Robinette kept talking about "original" documents or "real" letters or bills when what they were referring to were documents they had faked for North. Each of them seemed genuinely puzzled when Keker pointed this out. Hall tried to make Keker distinguish between "new originals," or "altered originals," and actual originals, written the year before—while Robinette maintained that a bill he had sent North was "real" because he had typed it. "O.K. It's real," Keker acknowledged. "In a philosophical sense, it's real. But what it talks about is not real." Finally, Robinette took the point.

For North, the real guerrillas may have been the "freedom fighters" he described in his briefings and memorandums. These were, of course, the guerrillas his superiors wanted to hear about. As McFarlane recalled at the trial, North's task in 1984-85 consisted not merely of resupplying the Contras but of persuading them to bring in credible political leaders, to adopt an appealing political platform. It was also to have them demonstrate that they had real military potential. In sum, North was to create a respectable political-military force, so that Congress would resume its funding. The task was an impossible one for North; after all, the entire C.I.A. had already failed at it. But since the purpose was to persuade Congress to vote more aid to the Contras, appearances were more important than the reality. North himself said that to Calero on one occasion—in reference to rumors of corruption. Because appearances were what counted, North himself created a political front for the Contras, wrote out a political platform, and exaggerated military successes. Thus, in April of 1985, when the White House was ready to do battle for Contra aid again, the President had his selling points for Congress. (It was at this juncture that Reagan compared the Contras to the Founding Fathers of the United States.) The trouble was that the President now "knew" a good deal about the Contras that simply was not true. With all the detailed briefings, the thing no one ever seems to have told him was that the Contras had no hope of defeating the Sandinistas on the battlefield.

Along the way, it would not have been surprising if North himself had begun to lose some track of reality. Not only was he writing the promotional material for the Contras but he was also making the pitches and raising money for them. In a period of three years, by his own account, he gave dozens upon dozens of briefings to conservative groups around the country. In the spring of 1985, with the help of Spitz Channell and the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty, North orchestrated a public-relations campaign for the Contras with ninety-five scheduled events. He also gave individual briefings to wealthy people targeted to contribute to the Contras through the N.E.P.L. Before such a briefing, Channell would decide how much the prospective donor was good for, and North would give Channell a list of items—trucks, planes, munitions—that added up to the prescribed amount. After the briefing, Channell would hand the person the list of what were then described as "desperately needed" supplies. The backward logic of this classic fund-raising technique applied to all North's activities on behalf of the Contras. In the White House, the Contras had, by the summer of 1985, become half imaginary—a function of the President's desire to get aid for them.

Later, a new solipsism crept in on top of the old one. According to McFarlane, the President, as time went

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on, began to think that the Democrats in Congress were holding up Contra aid at least partly in order to show that he was politically vulnerable. He therefore determined to get the aid bill passed partly just to show the Democrats who was boss. He succeeded in the summer of 1986, but in the meantime a great many high-level Administration officials had violated all kinds of laws for the sake of a half-imaginary guerrilla force.

At one point in the trial, the defense produced a sheaf of documents showing that in the spring of 1985 the Reagan Administration, in violation of the Boland amendment, had offered the government of Honduras a quid pro quo for helping the Contras. The news caused a stir in Congress, for those documents had not been handed over to the Iran-Contra committees, and in 1985 Shultz had assured at least one congressional committee that American aid to other countries was not being used to provide direct or indirect support to the Contras. Also, one of the documents suggested that Vice-President Bush may have personally delivered the conditions of the quid pro quo to President Roberto Suazo Córdova of Honduras. When the trial was over, Bush vehemently denied this. "There was no quid pro quo," he said. "There has been needless, mindless speculation about my word of honor."

According to the documents, however, there was a quid pro quo, and, unlike the general understandings offered to countries such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, it was an extremely specific one: if the government of Honduras would continue to give sanctuary and assistance to the Contras, the United States government would release thirty-five million dollars in economic-support funds, expedite the delivery of military aid, and supplement certain C.I.A. programs. The deal was designed on February 7, 1985, by the so-called Crisis Pre-Planning Group—a body that included officials from the national-security agencies up to the assistant-secretary level—and was later approved by Secretaries Shultz and Weinberger. On the recommendation of these officials, President Reagan sent President Suazo a letter asking that the Honduran government do all in its power to help "those who struggle for freedom and democracy." The talking points drafted to accompany the letter made the deal perfectly ex-

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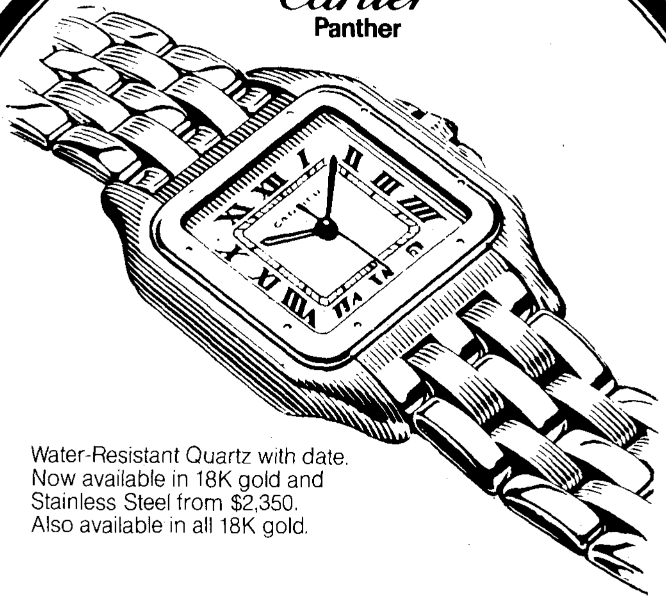

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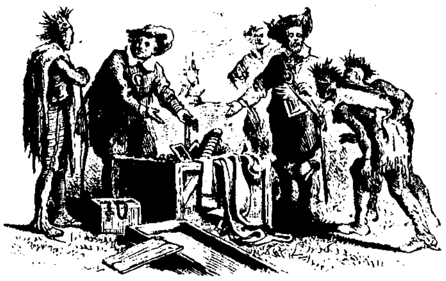

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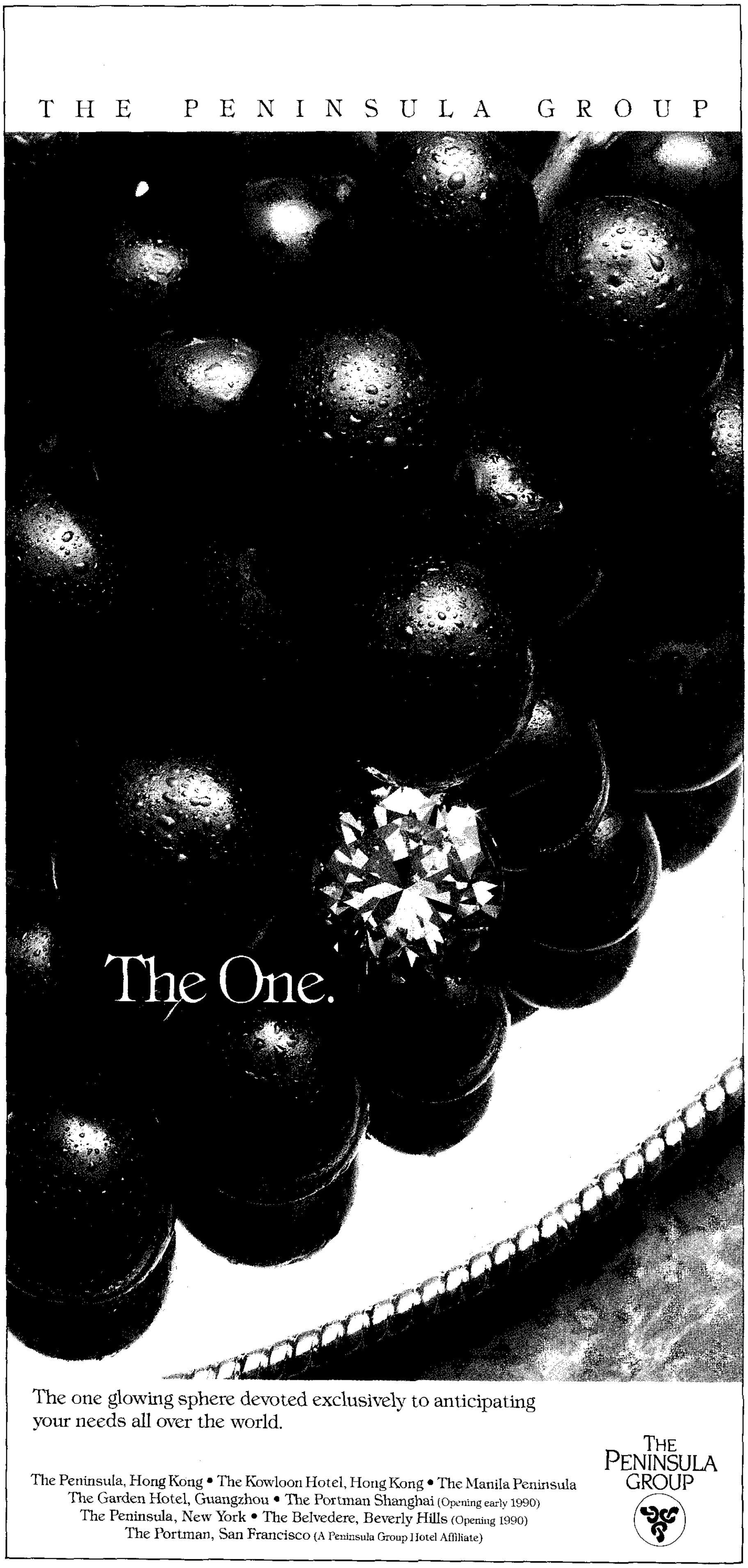
plicit. And in the two months following the delivery of the letter the funds and the munitions arrived. The only question was who had delivered the talking points. Normally, the bearer of talking points is the American ambassador to the country concerned, but from one of the documents it is clear that North and another National Security Council staff member had argued that it would not be wise for Ambassador Negroponte to deliver them, because he was soon to come up before the Senate for confirmation to another post, and he might be asked if the United States had made any such arrangements with Honduras. (In this memo North showed a sensitivity to the Boland amendment that he never admitted to at the hearings. But he was not on trial for violating Boland.) North and his colleague recommended that a secret emissary be sent to Suazo. Apparently, their recommendation was turned down, and apparently Ambassador Negroponte was sent a less explicit set of talking points to deliver. Vice-President Bush was due to visit Honduras in the near future, however, and across one memo to the State Department concerning the Reagan letter Poindexter scrawled, "Add that we want the VP to also discuss this matter with Suazo." According to the trial stipulation, Bush did meet with Suazo, and informed him that President Reagan was expediting the delivery of military, economic, and C.I.A. assistance to Honduras. In other words, he presented the quid, while Reagan's letter clearly indicated the quo.

Why George Bush would deny that there had been a quid pro quo is mysterious in most respects. In the first place, the United States had always compensated Honduras for the use of its territory for the F.D.N. bases. Now that Congress had cut off Contra aid, the Hondurans faced the distinct possibility that the Contras might lose, leaving Honduras with a lot of hungry riflemen wandering about the country. The Hondurans thus required an assurance of continuing support from the Administration—or they would simply have made an accommodation with the Sandinistas. In the second place, the entire relationship between the two governments was made of such transactions. In Honduras, a country yet untouched by postmodern forms of accounting, the quid pro quo was the normal form of exchange, and the



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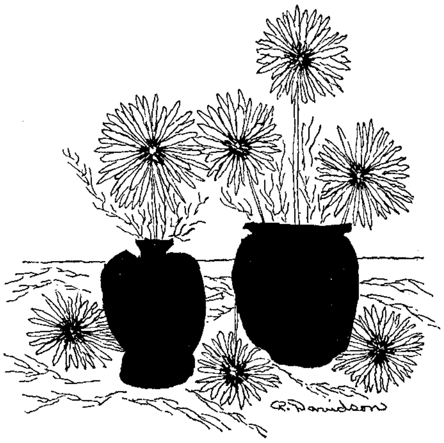
buyer had to pay up front. While individuals paid for tangible goods, such as residence visas, the United States government often paid for abstract items, such as economic and political reform. The reason the economic-support funds had not already been disbursed was that the Honduran government had failed to carry out economic reforms that Washington had asked for. Therefore, the United States had a quid left over and could expend it for a different quo. Actually, there was a total of a hundred and seventy-four million dollars in unexpended economic-support funds, so by releasing only thirty-five million dollars for Contra support the United States had something left over in case it needed to persuade the Honduran government of something else that year—and, predictably, it did. A month or so before the Honduran elections, the new American Ambassador, John Ferch, held up the remaining funds to insure that they were not misappropriated, and that Suazo (who by law could not succeed himself) would leave them to the winner of the election. By then, however, Honduran officials had once more held up the Reagan Administration on the Contra issue.

On April 24, 1985, following a negative vote on Contra aid in Washington, Honduran officials threatened once again to deny the Contras sanctuary in Honduras, and actually detained a shipment of munitions to a Contra base camp. The next day, Reagan called Suazo to assure him that he would continue to press Congress for Contra funds and to ask him to see that the shipment got through. Suazo agreed to insure that the shipment would go through. In early May, according to Ambassador Negroponte's cables, two companies of Sandinista troops attacked F.D.N. positions several kilometres inside Honduras; and a few days later Sandinista troops attacked a Honduran border unit, killing one soldier and wounding four others. A thousand Honduran villagers fled temporarily to safety. As a result of these attacks, the Honduran military decided to relocate the F.D.N. base camp.

When President Suazo visited Washington, on May 21st, McFarlane—from the evidence of the documents—objected to the relocation of the base camp to a "remote and untenable" site. The same day, Suazo met in the Cabinet Room of the White House with President Reagan, Vice-President Bush, Weinberger, Shultz, Baker, and others. In his briefing paper for the President, McFarlane asked Reagan to reiterate "the importance we attach to his continued coöperation in enabling the F.D.N. to remain a viable element of pressure on the Sandinistas," and he added, "Without making the linkage too explicit, it would be useful to remind Suazo that in return for our help . . . we do expect coöperation. . . . In this regard you could underline the seriousness of our security commitment, which the Hondurans seem to regard as the main quid pro quo for coöperating with the F.D.N." If Reagan followed McFarlane's instructions, as he normally did, then he laid out the whole quid pro quo himself, in the presence of George Bush, Caspar Weinberger, George Shultz, and James Baker, the present Secretary of State. This, it might be assumed, was heavy enough pressure on Suazo to insure his coöperation. But it was not—or not for long. Again, a few months later the Honduran government banned all transshipments of aid to the Contras in retaliation for the embarrassment it suffered when Mario Calero, Adolfo's brother, brought a TV camera crew in with one of the shipments. The ban was not lifted until after Suazo left office, in January of 1986.

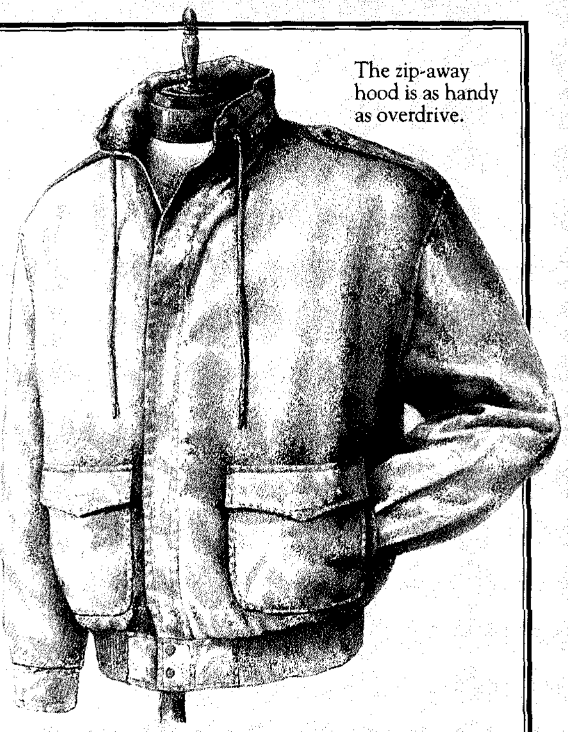
Honduras was not the only Central American country to be offered a quid pro quo for supporting the Contras after the passage of the Boland amendment. Indeed, the trial documents revealed that the Administration had to offer inducements to all of them. In exchange for help in getting weapons to the Contras, senior Guatemalan military officers gave North a shopping list of weapons they wanted from the United States. North and McFarlane lobbied the national-security agencies to fulfill the order—though they gave the Cabinet Secretaries other reasons for sending the military aid. President José Napoleón Duarte of El Salvador was extremely leery of helping the Contras, lest Congress find out, but since the Administration kept increasing aid to his government he had to allow his Air Force chief to provide logistical support. In the fall of 1985, the Minister of Security of Costa Rica signed off on a deal, approved by President Luis Alberto Monge, permitting the construction of a Contra-resupply airstrip in exchange for C.I.A. assistance. The Minister of Security was also rewarded with a trip to the White House and a photograph taken of himself with President Reagan. A new President, Oscar Arias, was elected in the spring of 1986, and his government abrogated the deal and made public the existence of the airstrip. The N.S.C. called for the cancellation of a scheduled meeting of Arias with Reagan. North wrote Poindexter, "We should insist that Arias demonstrate his good will toward the resistance through practical steps *before* he is welcomed in the Oval Office." Such was the tenor of American diplomacy in Central America during the period 1984-86.



Even worse might have happened if the secret Contra-resupply operation had not been exposed, in October of 1986. That summer, according to the stipulation document, a representative of General Manuel Noriega, of Panama, proposed to North that if the United States would lift its ban on military sales to the Panamanian Defense Forces and help to "clean up Noriega's image" in the United States, Noriega would assassinate the Sandinista leadership. North explained that assassinations were against American law. But he responded more positively to the representative's next proposal, which was that Noriega would use his numerous assets in Nicaragua for a campaign of sabotage. North reported this conversation to Poindexter and added that Noriega had the assets he proffered. Poindexter responded that such assets would be helpful in terms of sabotage, and recommended that North speak directly with Noriega. In late September, North reported that he had met with Noriega in London and Noriega had promised to try to take immediate action against Sandinista targets, the priorities including an oil refinery, an airport, and a dock.

Whether Noriega would have fulfilled his end of the deal is not altogether certain. He undoubtedly had contacts in Nicaragua, for he had sold arms to the Sandinistas when they were fighting Anastasio Somoza and, later, to the Salvadoran guerrillas, sometimes using airstrips inside Costa Rica. Whether he in fact had the assets was less clear: the only asset North seems to have known about was a Panamanian civilian ordnance expert, who had been part of the team, led by David Walker, that in attempting to blow up the arsenal had managed to set fire to the military hospital as well. Also, by then Noriega was well known for promising a lot but delivering very little to the Contras. On the other hand, his "image" in the United States was clearly in jeopardy, thanks to the brutal murder of a leading political opponent in 1985 and to articles by Seymour Hersh, published in the *Times* in June of 1986, exposing his drug-trafficking activities. According to a former senior intelligence official from Panama, who appeared before a Senate subcommittee, North and Noriega met at least twice in 1985, and the Udall Research Corporation, the Secord cutout that saw to the construction of the resupply airstrip, used a law firm in Panama that handled some of Noriega's business. So perhaps Noriega was making a serious offer. In any case, Poindexter's acceptance of the offer was an indication of just how obsessed the Administration had become by Nicaragua.

In making these secret arrangements with military officers throughout Central America, Administration officials were doing much the same thing that Casey did when he looked for his tape recorder—pulling down everything they had carefully constructed in Central America for the sake of something that did not exist; namely, an effective guerrilla opposition to the Sandinistas. For this illusion, they were sacrificing diplomatic leverage in the region, and they were undermining the civilian leaders they had put so much effort into shoring up in order to give legitimacy to the cause of anti-Communism. Of course, in the larger scheme of things—that of American security and the fate of the world—these losses were petty and inconsequential. Yet it was in the larger scheme of things that the obsession with Nicaragua looked the



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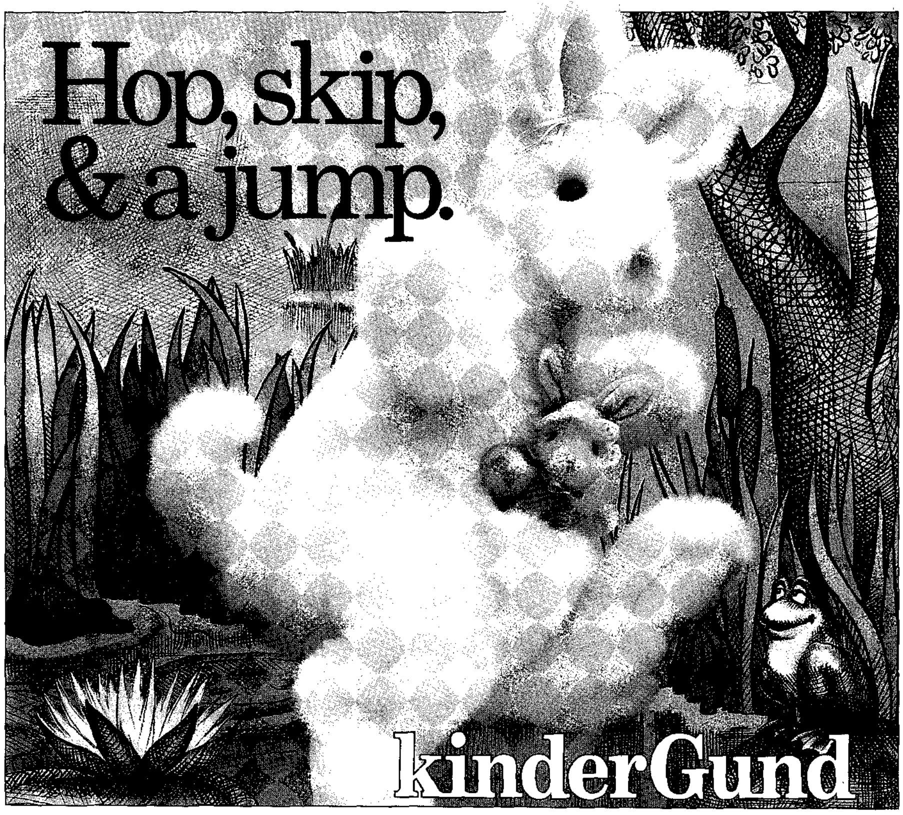

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most bizarre. At a time of enormous changes in China, the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe, the White House was principally engaged with "rolling back Communism" in a nation of three and a half million people by the agency of a half-imaginary guerrilla force. In pursuit of this obsession, officials throughout the national-security bureaucracy were willing to lie to Congress and otherwise violate the laws of the land.

The Democrats in Congress were not without responsibility for the lawbreaking. In four successive years, beginning in 1982, Democrats in the House, joined by a few Republicans, pushed through laws restricting aid to the Contras which they lacked the political strength or the political will to force on the Administration. The quid pro quo with Honduras, for example, lay virtually in plain sight; the continued existence of the Contra camps pointed directly to it. And by the summer of 1985 the major newspapers of the country had stories about Oliver North and the support of the Contras by private donors. Yet, rather than launch a congressional investigation, the chairmen of the relevant committees questioned Administration officials and left things at that—thus making it extremely tempting for those officials to lie to them. And official after official did lie, each one making it more difficult for the next to tell the truth. By the time the affair was exposed, so many had lied that the process continued. To cover for themselves or their colleagues, officials now lied to the Tower Commission, to the Iran-Contra committees, to the grand juries, and to the public at large. And the desire to protect their superiors made liars out of many honorable men.

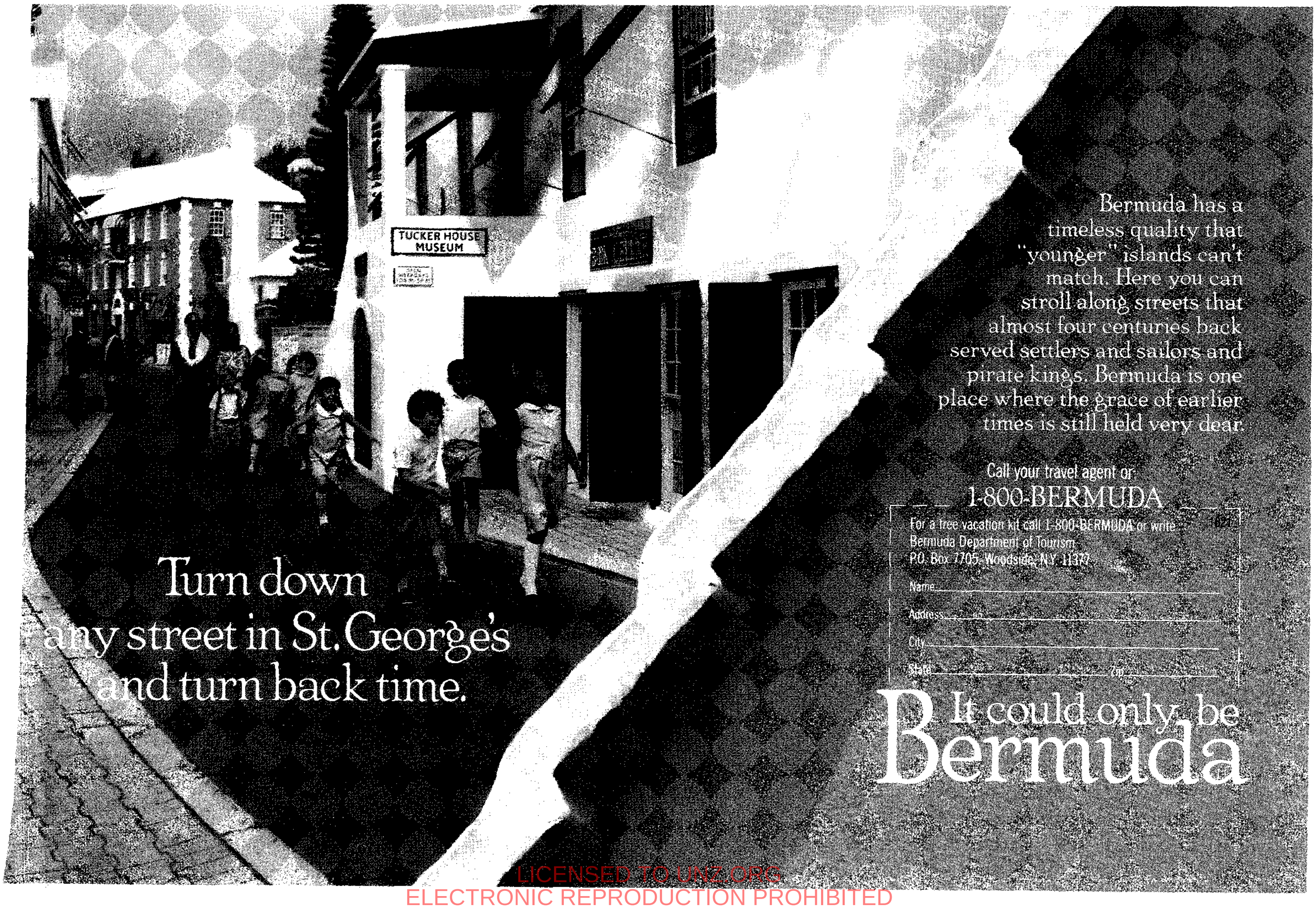
DURING the 1988 Presidential campaign, George Bush said on several occasions that he hadn't known anything about North's Contra-resupply operation until the Iran-Contra affair came to light. There is no proof positive that he had. But Donald Gregg, his national-security adviser at the time, was a close friend of Felix Rodriguez, a key figure in the resupply operation. Both Gregg and Rodriguez were former C.I.A. men, and in 1976, when Bush was director of the agency, he had met Rodriguez and come to know Gregg. A chronology prepared by Bush's office in 1986 showed that Rodriguez was in frequent contact with Gregg and had on occasion spoken with the Vice-President in 1985 and 1986, during the time when Rodriguez assisted the resupply from the Ilopango airbase, in El Salvador. In his deposition to the Iran-Contra committees, Gregg testified that he had never told Bush about the North operation and that he himself did not know about the delivery of lethal aid until August of 1986. Bush's own denial rested, in part, on Gregg's testimony.

This spring, a week after the North trial verdict was handed down, Gregg came before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for confirmation as Ambassador to South Korea. Senator Alan Cranston led off the hearing by charging that Gregg had "systematically misled" the Iran-Contra committees "in order to cover up the truth and to limit embarrassment" to Bush. Senator Cranston was annoyed. Earlier in the year, he said, certain colleagues of his had dissuaded Bush from putting up Gregg for a top C.I.A. post. But now Bush had nominated Gregg for another job that required the consent of the Senate. Grilling Gregg about his knowledge of the Contra affair was the last thing the Democrats on the committee wanted to do at this point, yet, tucked away in the twenty-seven volumes of Iran-Contra depositions, there was such a distinct trail of evidence indicating that Gregg had lied to the Iran-Contra committees that Cranston felt he had no choice in the matter.

Gregg's performance that day did nothing to relieve the senators of their dilemma. Asked about a Vice-Presidential briefing memorandum of April 30, 1986, stating that Rodriguez would brief Bush on "the status of the war in El Salvador and resupply of the Contras," Gregg maintained that there had been no such briefing about the Contras, and that he had no idea how the word "Contras" could have appeared in the memo—except that possibly it was a garbled reference to "copters." This possibility was in fact almost nonexistent, for the word appeared on two memorandums; also, the professional slang for helicopters is "choppers." At the end of the day, the senators postponed the hearing. Clearly, the Democrats were loath to pursue a line of inquiry that might lead directly to the Oval Office—though the Republicans accused them of wanting to do just that. The nomination hung in limbo for a month while, according to the Washington *Post*, the Democrats tried to persuade Bush to withdraw it. They failed, and when Gregg came up before the committee again, in mid-June, Senator Claiborne Pell, the chairman, and two other Democrats backed down and voted with the Republicans for the nomination. Cranston and six other Democrats voted in the minority against it.

The committee vote was a sign of the collective amnesia that was settling over the Iran-Contra affair. Another sign was the fact that few remarked on the connection between the Gregg hearing and the North trial, though the two proceedings took place within blocks of each other on Constitution Avenue. Of course, the connection was far from direct, but it would have appeared in the narrative that the senators would have had to construct linking Gregg to the resupply. That narrative is a story in and of itself; and, because the Iran-Contra committees did not focus on Bush's role in the Contra affair, it must be laboriously pieced together out of cables, memos, and bits of testimony from a score of witnesses. To follow the trail showing Gregg's involvement in the resupply operation, it is necessary first to plunge off into the underbrush of the Contra affair and encounter all kinds of new characters, including Salvadoran officers and Cubans from Miami. But eventually the trail winds back to Richard Secord and Oliver North. Rodriguez was, it turns out, the only independent witness to the inner workings of the organization that North and Secord created in Central America to deliver arms to the Contras. After being recruited by North, in September, he gradually came to see, from his vantage point in El Salvador, that the organization was filled with renegades and profiteers. Astonishingly, he and Gregg were the only ones to confront North about the corruption of the Secord enterprise and to warn of the danger it posed to the Administration. Thus, to show how Gregg "systematically misled" the Iran-Contra committees is, oddly, to gain the only contemporary perspective on the Contra operation which was remotely clearheaded. It is also to see a side of North that his jurors, among others, never saw.

Felix Rodriguez, a.k.a. Max Gomez, was, and is, a character fit for a spy novel. Born in Cuba, he attended school in the United States and emigrated permanently in 1958, two years before his high-school graduation. From there he went directly to a C.I.A. training camp for Cubans, in Central America. He infiltrated Cuba two months before the Bay of Pigs invasion, and when the invasion failed he managed to escape through the Venezuelan Embassy in Havana. For some years, he worked out of the C.I.A. station in Miami, reinfiltrating Cuba several times during the various C.I.A. attempts to bring down the Castro regime. He worked in Central America, and later in Venezuela. In 1967, he went to Bolivia on a C.I.A. mission to track down Che Guevara, and was, as it happened, the only foreigner with the Bolivian patrol that found and shot the Cuban leader. He and Guevara had a two-hour conversation before Guevara died. They were men made of the same cloth—only with different ideological dyes—



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and Rodriguez to this day has Guevara's watch.

In 1970, he went to Vietnam, to serve as an adviser to the Vietnamese Provincial Reconnaissance Units, whose mission was to track down and "neutralize" Vietcong cadres. He spent three years in Vietnam, and while he was there he developed a new method of finding and destroying small guerrilla units. The method was simple, but not one that many would imitate: he would fly a very light helicopter at treetop level until he sighted guerrillas or until his chopper was fired on, at which point he would call in nearby helicopter gunships. The C.I.A. chief of the region around Saigon, where Rodriguez operated, was Donald Gregg. The two became friends, and Rodriguez would as a rule go and talk to Gregg after missions—particularly if there were casualties involved. It was, Gregg has said, a kind of "combat catharsis." As Rodriguez found a confessor in Gregg, so Gregg must have felt for him what a deskman feels for the soldier he sends into combat. To North's deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Earl, it seemed that they had "a very strong personal bond . . . almost a blood-brother relationship." In any case, the two continued to see each other after they left Vietnam, and even after Rodriguez left the C.I.A., with a disability pension, in 1976.

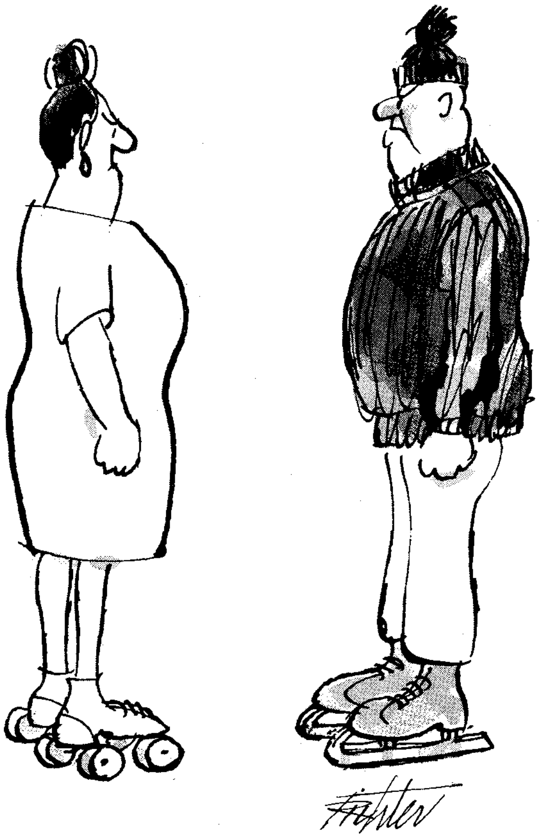
In 1983, Rodriguez visited Central America. Possibly he was bored with civilian life; certainly he felt he had a stake in the new anti-Communist struggles in the region. One stop was El Salvador, where he thought his helicopter tactics might be of some use; another stop was Honduras, where he visited the Contras as a representative of a medical-aid mission from the Cuban American community. At one point, he told Adolfo Calero he was considering joining up with the Contras. On his return, he met with Gregg, and, according to the chronology that Bush's office later provided, the two discussed "the general situation in Central America." The following summer, Rodriguez took another trip to the region, this time clearly looking for a job. He went to see General Paul Gorman, the chief of the United States Southern Command, with headquarters in Panama. Gorman brushed him off, not wanting any "amateurs" in his area. Gorman did not know Rodriguez.

On December 21, 1984, Rodriguez met with Gregg and asked him to use his influence to get him a job. Gregg made calls recommending his friend to Tony Motley, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs; Nestor Sanchez, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American Affairs; and Thomas Pickering, the United States Ambassador to El Salvador. He did not, however, call anyone in the C.I.A. By then, Rodriguez had so many associations in the netherworld of Cuban exiles in Miami that his former employers would not touch him.

While Rodriguez was in the White House (actually, the Old Executive Office Building), he dropped in to see Colonel North with an introduction from a friend. North, Rodriguez later testified, was very positive about his going to Central America. What he told North is not clear from the testimony, but both Gregg and Rodriguez told the Iran-Contra committees that they had discussed the possibility that Rodriguez might go to El Salvador—and nothing else. Perhaps this was the case. But Robert Owen, North's courier to the Contras, testified at the trial that he had met Rodriguez in late January of 1985, and at that time Rodriguez was facing a choice: he had not decided whether to go to El Salvador or to go to work for the Contras.

At the end of January, Rodriguez met the chief of staff of the Salvadoran armed forces in Washington and received at least a casual invitation from him. He was ready to depart for San Salvador when Ambassador Pickering told him to go see General Gorman first. According to a draft cable written by Colonel James Steele, the head of the United States Military Group in El Salvador, Pickering cabled Gorman on a back channel that Rodriguez was very well connected in Washington. He and Steele were worried, however, about having a "loose cannon" and a "no pay mercenary" around. On February 8th, a week later, Gorman cabled back: "Subject has been put into play by Ollie North. . . . Ollie assures me that his intent was to focus Rodriguez on forces operating elsewhere in CentAm. . . . I stressed our concern . . . that we really had enough advice for the ESAF. . . . Ollie rogered and said that Rodriguez can be much more useful in other places, where aid and advice is much scarcer." On February 14th, Gorman sent another back-channel cable to Pickering and Steele, saying that he had met with Rodriguez and could assure them that "Rodriguez' primary commitment to the region is in [Honduras], where he wants to assist the F.D.N." Gorman added, "I told him the F.D.N. deserves his priority."

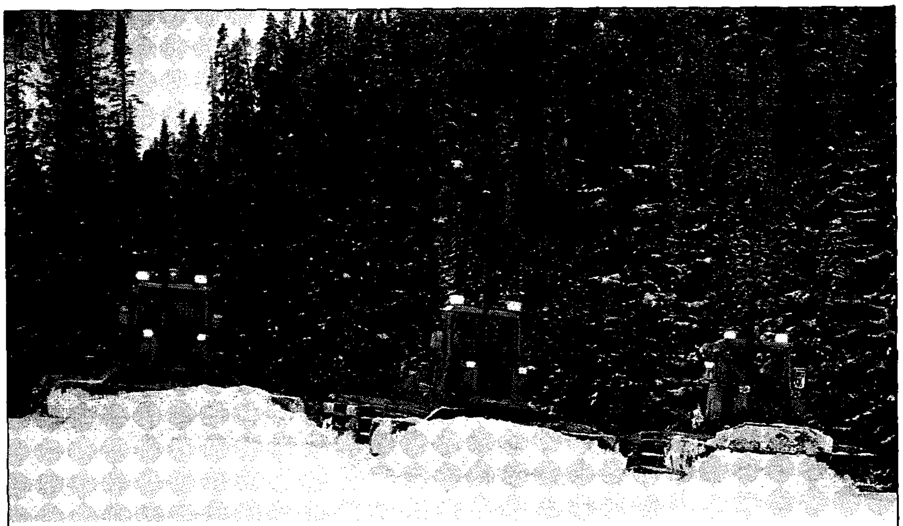
Gorman, who had no regard whatever for the military capabilities of the Contras, clearly hoped that Rodriguez could be fobbed off on the F.D.N. But when Rodriguez finally arrived in El Salvador he impressed Pickering and Steele and persuaded them of the value of his helicopter tactics to the counterinsurgency effort. He went to work on March 15th, and a month later he deeply impressed the chief of the Salvadoran Air Force, General Juan Rafael Bustillo, by capturing one of the most important of the guerrilla *comandantes* on a helicopter sortie. Now he had a job, and Donald Gregg, at his request, wrote a proud letter to Steele about his friend's success.



Rodriguez worked hard in El Salvador, training pilots and flying more than a hundred missions himself in six months. His helicopter was hit at least fifteen times, and once crash-landed. The Salvadoran Air Force took all the credit for his success, for he wore a Salvadoran uniform and on occasion fooled American journalists into thinking he was a Salvadoran pilot. He was not paid by the United States or the Salvadoran government, but Air Force friends gave him a place to stay, and the American Embassy gave him a commissary pass, a radio, and, for a brief time, an armored car. The one luxury he seems to have allowed himself was dropping the names of his friends in high places. For six months, he was apparently doing nothing but flying in El Salvador. Yet Rodriguez cannot have been wholly cut off from the war in Nicaragua even then. There were Cuban exiles, including at least one buddy of his, fighting on both the northern and the southern fronts, and the Cuban-American community in Miami was contributing aid and assistance. There is evidence to suggest that Rodriguez was continuing to help out with the private Cuban efforts. He met with North on several occasions.

An entry in North's notebook for September 10th records a meeting with Donald Gregg and Colonel Steele and a discussion of a proposed visit by Adolfo Calero and Colonel Enrique Bermúdez, the F.D.N. commander, to Ilopango to set up a support base for logistics and maintenance at the airfield. Gregg has maintained that there never was such a meeting, but North's notebooks have proved to be a highly reliable source of information. In an entry for September 16th North wrote of a call from Steele, "What about Felix help for a/c maintenance?" Four days later, North wrote Rodriguez a letter asking him to obtain the consent of Salvadoran military officials for the establishment of a service space for two types of F.D.N. aircraft that would be used to supply the Contras on the southern front. He warned Rodriguez that this was "a completely compartmented operation being handled by the Resistance," and that he should not tell the C.I.A.

At that point, of course, it was common knowledge that North had something to do with military assistance to the Contras. As the cables between Gorman and Pickering show, North's



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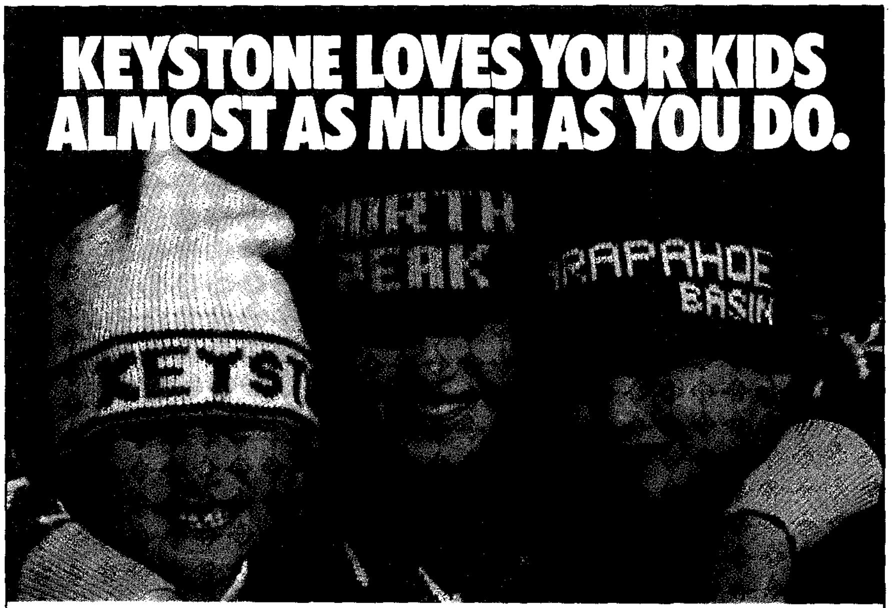

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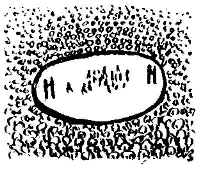
involvement with the Contras had been an open secret among senior United States officials in Central America for at least nine months. Now reports about North were turning up in the newspapers. Still, most American officials, including Edwin Corr, who in August had replaced Pickering as Ambassador to El Salvador, believed that North was involved with private American donors and mercenaries. They did not know where the funds were coming from, nor did they know that North controlled them, or that he was using Secord to buy weapons and conduct the resupply. Rodriguez himself did not know these things at the time.



On November 27th, Bush sent North an enthusiastic handwritten note wishing him a happy Thanksgiving and thanking him for his "dedication and tireless work with the hostage thing and with Central America." In fact, there were a lot of things North could have told Bush about the resupply effort without telling him anything that would have surprised United States officials in Central America.

Rodriguez easily obtained consent from General Bustillo to give the Contra-resupply planes space at Ilopango. North told him to wait for a call from a Mr. Green. When he received it, he knew the voice immediately: it was that of Rafael (Chi-Chi) Quintero, a former C.I.A. agent, whom he had known since the Bay of Pigs, and who he knew had been involved with Edwin Wilson. A day after the call, a Boeing 707 with Southern Air Transport markings arrived at Ilopango with a full cargo of ammunition; it was the first of five or six such planeloads. But the planes to transport the matériel into Nicaragua did not arrive for some months.

On December 20th, Rodriguez attended a Christmas party at Gregg's office and met other staff members, including Gregg's new military deputy, Colonel Sam Watson. In mid-January, Watson took a trip to Central America to acquaint himself with the region; he spent three days with Rodriguez in El Salvador and went on to Honduras to visit the F.D.N. base camps and an airstrip from which the Contras on the northern front were resupplied. In his deposition to the Iran-Contra committee lawyers, Watson said that he and Rodriguez had discussed El Salvador exclusively, and that he knew nothing about North's role in the Contra resupply.

By the end of April, 1986, Rodriguez had decided to leave El Salvador. According to his testimony, he told General Bustillo and Ambassador Corr that he was tired, had done enough flying, and wanted to go home. But the real reason was that he had begun to smell trouble in the Contra operation. At first, he had imagined that Quintero was working directly for North and for the Contras. But by February he had discovered that Richard Secord, whom he associated with Edwin Wilson, was directing the operation, and that Tom Clines was also involved. Clines had been his case officer in Miami during the early sixties, but when Clines went to work with Wilson, in 1979, selling arms to Libya, Rodriguez broke with him completely. Rodriguez might have countenanced "the Wilson people," as he called them, for the sake of the Contras, but by April he had reason to believe they were ripping off the F.D.N. Clines, according to his information, had sold Calero and Bermúdez three-dollar hand grenades for nine dollars apiece; and three of the four transport aircraft Secord had sent down—two Caribous and a C-123—were little more than rustbuckets. One of the Caribous had lost an engine on the flight from Miami, and the mechanic who was sent down to fix it drank anywhere from twenty-four to thirty-six beers a day and complained that he made better money working on drug planes.

On April 20th, North and Secord had flown to Ilopango to meet with Bermúdez and other F.D.N. officers. At the meeting, the Contra leaders had complained—justifiably, in Rodriguez's view—that the aircraft were too old, too slow, and too small to fly resupply missions deep into Nicaragua. North had replied that he could do nothing about this, because the planes had been donated, and had added that if only he had the money he would buy them a C-130. North and Secord, of course, had plenty of money. Whether or not Rodriguez knew this at the time, it was this meeting that convinced him he should quit. Ten days later, he went to Washington to inform Gregg and others of his decision.

His first evening in Washington,

Rodriguez met Sam Watson for a drink. The next morning, he had an appointment with the Vice-President and Donald Gregg. He went to the White House ahead of time and dropped by North's office to tell the Colonel that he was tired and would be leaving El Salvador. North did his best to persuade him to stay on—Rodriguez was his only link to Bustillo and the Ilopango airbase—but failed. Rodriguez went down to the Vice-President's office, where he was introduced, according to the May 1st briefing memo, as "a counterinsurgency expert" who was "visiting from El Salvador" and would provide "a briefing on the status of the war in El Salvador and resupply of the Contras."

Whatever the explanation for the phrase—and whatever it might have meant to Bush's staff at the time—"resupply of the Contras" was not discussed in any detail at the meeting, if, in fact, it was discussed at all, for Senator Nicholas Brady (now Secretary of the Treasury) was in Bush's office when Rodriguez went in, and a few minutes later an aide appeared and said that Ambassador Corr was in the outer office. When Corr, accompanied by North, was ushered in, Corr launched into a paean of praise for Rodriguez's work in El Salvador and said he hoped that Felix would stay on for as long as he was Ambassador. Clearly, North had brought Corr in to do just that—and possibly also to deny Rodriguez the opportunity to complain about the Secord operation to Bush and Gregg. He succeeded: Corr's accolade, delivered in the presence of the Vice-President, shamed Rodriguez out of declaring his intention to quit. In embarrassment—so he testified—he returned to his two jobs in El Salvador.

On June 25th, not quite two months later, Rodriguez returned to Washington, at the request of North. About a month before, Colonel Robert Dutton, an old Air Force friend of Secord's and now a business associate, had flown to Ilopango to draw up an organization chart of the resupply operation in order to put a value on its assets. By then, the airlift to the southern front was under way, but, because of the condition of the planes, the crews, which were provided by Southern Air Transport, had managed to make only one successful drop, and that was with a leased plane. On a night flight, one of the planes, without working radar, hit

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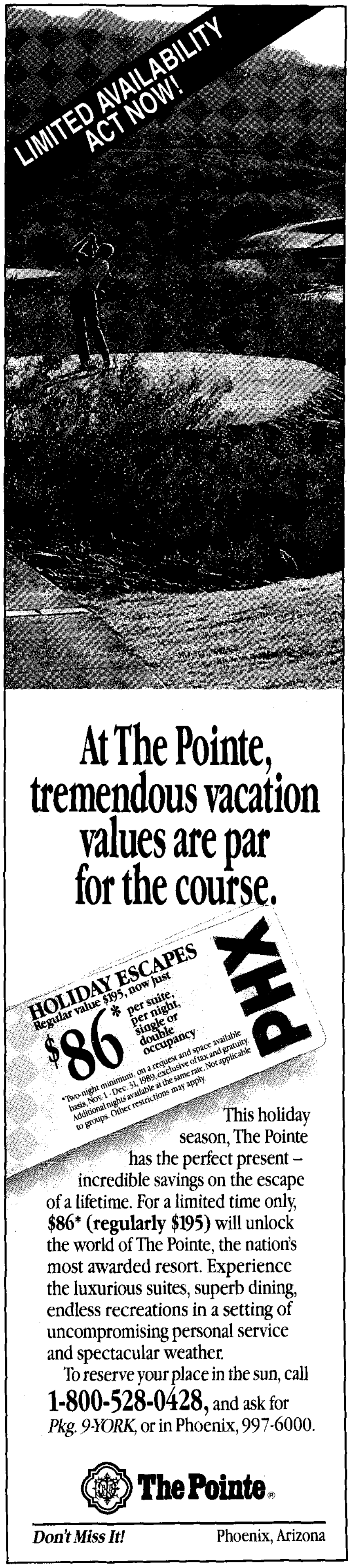

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the top of a mountain, lost an engine, and almost crashed. Rodriguez was furious. But so was North, for Secord had told him that there seemed to be a leak in the operation, and that Rodriguez—who had quarrelled with Dutton—was probably it.

Dutton was in North's office when Rodriguez arrived. At the meeting, North accused Rodriguez of violating operational security (or "opsec," as he liked to call it) by talking over open phone lines, and claimed that he could prove it. (Doubtless this had something to do with the fact that Rodriguez liked to boast about making phone calls to the Vice-President's office.) He then offered Rodriguez three thousand dollars a month for his continued services. The charge infuriated Rodriguez, and so did the offer of money; since North did not offer him further operational control, it seemed to be in the nature of a bribe. Rodriguez complained vehemently about the condition of the aircraft and protested that North was using Clines and others involved with Edwin Wilson; this, he said, could do more damage to the President than Watergate had done to Nixon. North assured him that Clines was a patriot.

Rodriguez then went down to the Vice-President's suite and talked to Sam Watson, Bush and Gregg being out of town that day. A few minutes later, North came into the office, stopping the conversation just as he had two months before.

Rodriguez returned to Ilopango, and two things happened. The first was that Rodriguez learned that North and Secord, looking ahead to October, when the C.I.A. would resume its role in support of the Contras, were planning either to sell the resupply aircraft or to lease the whole operation, pilots and all, to the C.I.A. The second was that Rodriguez took a trip to Miami and returned in a C-123 loaded with spare airplane parts, the mayor of West Miami, and fifteen hundred pounds of medical supplies that the mayor had donated to the Contras.

These two events brought the quarrel between Rodriguez and the Secord group to a head. Secord ordered the operation shut down and the planes returned to Miami. But Rodriguez and General Bustillo refused, threatening to impound the aircraft—unless Secord continued the resupply missions. Secord then threatened Rodriguez with a lawsuit for "air piracy." Opsec was now out the window.

Donald Gregg was not in Washington during this period, but Watson's notes reflect angry reactions from North and Earl. Gregg returned on August 5th, and the next day he called Rodriguez to say that North had approached him about a stolen aircraft and to ask if he knew anything about it. At this point, Rodriguez decided to go to Washington and tell Gregg the whole story. Rodriguez met with Gregg and Watson on August 8th, and Gregg took two and a half pages of notes on what his friend told him. The notes begin, "Using Ed Wilson group for supplies. Felix used by Ollie to get Contra plane repaired at [Ilopango]." In his testimony, Gregg said that the missing subject of the first sentence was "North." Clearly, the news to him was not that North was involved but that North was using the Wilson group. Farther along, the notes make reference to Secord, Clines, Quintero, Dutton, and Gadd (that is, Richard Gadd, Secord's airline contractor), and list Rodriguez's complaints. In the first paragraph, a notation reads, "A swap of weapons for $ was arranged to get aid for Contras." When Gregg was asked what this note meant, he said, "I took that to mean that the proceeds which were coming from the public donations, et cetera, that I knew was going on had been effectuated and that the money was being used to purchase in this case hand grenades." Curiously, the lawyers deposing Gregg did not seem to notice the inversion he had made, though clearly the notation suggested that the money behind the operation came from the sale of arms. During the hearings, Senator George Mitchell questioned Rodriguez about the notation and got the puzzling reply that, while everything else in Gregg's notes reflected what he had told Gregg, that one note did not.

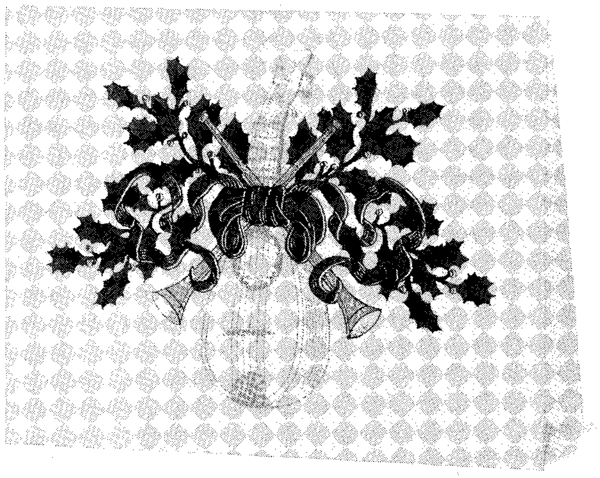
According to Rodriguez, Gregg was surprised and angry when he heard that the Wilson group was involved. He called North's office and, because North was not there, got Earl on the phone. He told Earl that he wanted him to come down and listen to the outrageous report he had just heard.

He used an expletive. Earl went down and heard Rodriguez out. According to Earl's testimony, Gregg was furious. He said that Clines was a sneak who would sell his own mother. Later in the day, Gregg made a special trip to Earl's office to say that the corruption was what really bothered him. He mentioned Clines and others.

Earl was asked during his deposition how he felt about the Wilson crowd's being involved, and he told the lawyers, "Dirty problems require dirty people."

Yet less than a year later Gregg could not remember the vividness of his own reaction. He could not remember having called North's office to protest. In his testimony, he spoke indulgently of North and his choice of associates: North "was doing far more than any one man should do," he said, and "He went out into the world and found people who were ready, willing, and able to help, and they were not the best people . . . he was not in the best position to exercise quality control." Clines, he acknowledged, "was certainly a man capable of corruption," and knowing that Clines was involved made him think at the time that "there is a chance that there is corruption here." The year before, he would have used an expletive at such an account.

Gregg said that he did not tell George Bush what Rodriguez had told him, because it was not on the "Vice Presidential level," but that he had called a meeting of "the appropriate people" in his office to hear the story. On August 12th, there was a meeting in his office attended by Colonel Sam Watson, Colonel Robert Earl, Colonel James Steele, and Ambassador Edwin Corr. Also present were William Walker, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central America; Ray Burghardt, of the N.S.C. staff; Alan Fiers, the chief of the C.I.A.'s Central American Task Force; and Gregg himself. Seven of those present gave testimony before the Iran-Contra lawyers (only Burghardt was not deposed), and their accounts of the meeting have a marvellous, Rashomon-like quality—only it is Rashomon in a stateroom with the Marx Brothers. Each of the participants, after all, had a different level of knowledge about the Contra-resupply operation, and a different set of interests to protect. Earl, who knew almost everything about it, was horrified to see people at



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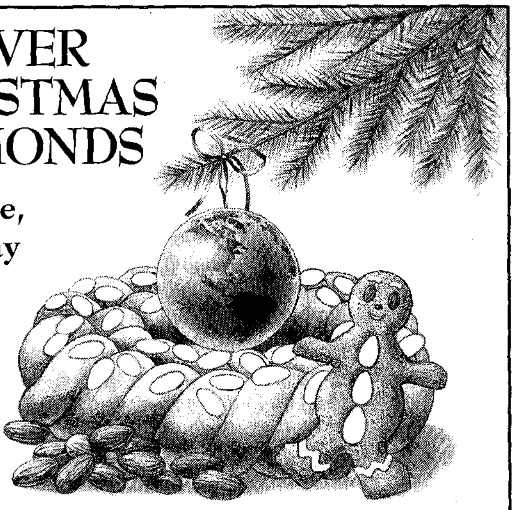

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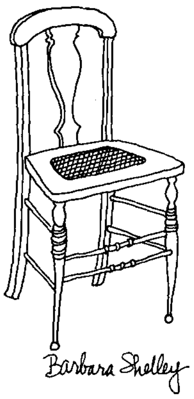
the meeting who, as he put it, "weren't in the compartment." Fiers, for his part, was horrified to find himself at the meeting, because his job, as he saw it, was to keep his head in the sand about North's operation—and he already knew too much for his own good and that of the agency. Of all the participants, only Edwin Corr was really happy to attend; indeed, he thought he had called the meeting. In El Salvador, Rodriguez had told him a part of the story, and since Corr had to come to Washington anyway he had asked for a meeting of the Restricted Interagency Group on Central America, so that he could tell his colleagues about the sloppiness and venality of "the private organization." To look at the participants, this was a RIG meeting. Corr thought that he would be telling the others something they didn't know. Actually, because of his comparative innocence, he, like Walker, did not understand what was going on between some of the other participants. In effect, there were two meetings in a single room.


Barbara Shelley

Testifying about the meeting, Donald Gregg said that he read from his notes of the conversation with Rodriguez, toning down Felix's rhetoric and omitting mention of North, but commenting that Tom Clines was "not a reliable person." Sam Watson testified that Gregg read from his notes and mentioned the names Secord and Clines. Watson also said that Fiers was quiet at the meeting, and that the question left open at the end of it was whether the C.I.A. intended to buy the Secord aircraft or not. He never heard anything further about the matter, and thus did not follow his usual practice of writing a report of the meeting for the Vice-President, because his information remained incomplete. Gregg, however, said that he did not ask anyone at the meeting to investigate the matter under discussion or to follow up—that his purpose had simply been to inform "the appropriate people" of what Rodriguez had told him.

The five other accounts of the meeting differ from those of Gregg and Watson in certain significant respects. Walker and Steele had the impression that the meeting was Corr's idea, for Corr opened the discussion and did a good deal of the talking. Corr recalled that he had begun by praising Rodriguez and repeating what Rodriguez had told him, and then had urged the others to use their influence to see that the airdrops continued and that the aircraft were given to the Contras, not taken back by the private group. The notes that Earl took at the meeting substantiate this account. Earl also recalled that Gregg vehemently attested to the integrity and the credibility of Rodriguez. (This was for Earl's benefit but also for that of Fiers, given Rodriguez's reputation with the C.I.A.) Steele and Fiers recalled that Gregg had expressed concern about the members of the resupply organization, but neither they nor Corr nor Walker could recall his mentioning the names of the people involved. None of them thought that the names Secord and Clines had ever come up, and Earl said he just didn't remember. Fiers, for his part, remembered everyone's being rather reticent at the meeting. Still, it became clear to him that Gregg was anxious to have the C.I.A. think well of Rodriguez and to refuse to buy the planes from the resupply organization. Fiers said he assured Gregg that the agency would not touch them. North, he testified, had offered them to him a month before, and at that time he had concluded that they were "hot cargo." Earl recalls Fiers talking vaguely about "disreputable characters" within "the Cuban-American community." And, according to Steele, who was, to use Earl's phrase, "in the compartment," Fiers also assured Gregg that the agency would not buy the planes.

From these five accounts, it seems that Gregg's purpose at the meeting was a fairly simple one—to warn the C.I.A. off North's resupply organization and its assets. Unwittingly, Corr had allowed him to do it without exposing his own knowledge of the operation or endangering the Vice-President. When Fiers indicated that he had been warned, Gregg must have thought his mission was accomplished: the C.I.A. would, after all, be taking over the Contra resupply in a couple of months; the Secord organization would have to fold up; and the potential for scandal would disappear. Gregg's only alternative at this late date was to expose the N.S.C. operation and to bring what he thought would be a scandal of Watergate dimensions down on the Administration.

On October 5th, less than two weeks before the bill containing funds for the C.I.A. to resume the Contra operation became law, a resupply plane with Eugene Hasenfus aboard was shot down over Nicaragua. Sam Watson was the first person in Washington to know, because Rodriguez called him as soon as he heard that the plane had gone down. Watson, in turn, called the White House situation room. In testimony, Gregg and Watson maintained that even then they did not know that Rodriguez was actively involved with the resupply operation. Gregg said that his friend did not tell him until mid-December of 1986—two months after the scandal broke. As the Iran-Contra committees' lawyers reconstructed it, that was just about the time that the Federal Bureau of Investigation called Gregg asking for Rodriguez's phone number, and that both were interviewed by the F.B.I. Thus was George Bush insulated from the Contra affair.

Actually, of course, the shooting down of the resupply plane was a disaster waiting to happen. Felix Rodriguez had predicted that something of the sort would occur. Yet he himself was partly to blame. Secord and his men had determined to shut down the operation after the "hijacking" incident, and remove the traces of it by returning the planes to Miami. But Rodriguez and Bustillo impounded the planes and insisted that the flights be continued. While they were negotiating with the pilots, Secord gave in and agreed to go on financing the operation. Thanks to Rodriguez, however, the flights now went out with a Contra soldier armed with an AK-47 on board, to insure that the crews did not turn the planes around and fly to Miami. Still nominally in control of the planes—though unable to retrieve them—Secord, with North's help, renewed his attempt to get the C.I.A. to buy or lease the planes by going over Fiers' head. To prove the worth of the operation, Secord stepped up the flight schedules, and in September the crews made eight successful drops to the southern front. Given the age and the condition of the planes, they were taking far too many risks. On October 5th, a Sandinista soldier on a patrol in the jungle took a shot at the C-123 rumbling low overhead.

AT the Iran-Contra hearings, Colonel North declaimed an epic tale of patriots and heroes who by their tireless devotion to the cause of the freedom fighters kept the flame of liberty alive in Central America during the dark days of apostasy in Congress. That was North's first real success in the whole affair. His second was in court, where he repeated the performance in a minor key, turning himself from hero into scapegoat and martyr. His great talent shone on these occasions. North was a briefer, a fantasist, an inspirational speaker—not an action officer. "Here comes Walter Mitty," a colleague reportedly once said as he walked into the room.

Given the trouble that North managed to cause, the remark seems in retrospect too charitable. Yet North's ambition was blind enough so that there seemed to be comic imagination at work somewhere. Instructed to do something, he would inevitably get it all backward. Sent out by Reagan to rescue the hostages, he found ingenious ways to sell arms to Iran and to hand over money to con men in Beirut, thus giving terrorists reason to take more hostages than they released. Sent out to support the Contras, he and Secord managed to stop the freedom fighters from getting most of the money that they raised for them. First, under Casey's direction, North hired Secord to buy arms for the Contras, for far higher prices than Calero had been paying. Then he put Secord and Hakim in charge of the diverted funds and the other money raised for the Contras. The members of the Secord enterprise pocketed almost as much as they spent on the Contra resupply. Of a total of ten million dollars North and Channell managed to raise from private American donors, only a million and a half went to the Contras. Apparently, North just did not notice that Channell and his associates were not passing along the bulk of it. When Secord finally bought four miserable aircraft to supply the Contras, North lied to the Contra commanders about the planes, and then did everything he could to sell the hot property to the C.I.A. for Secord's benefit. Instead of using

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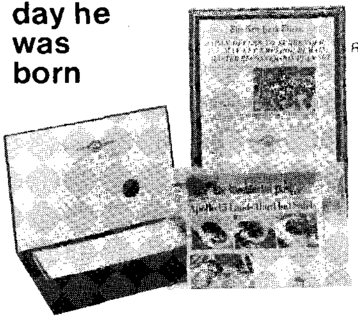

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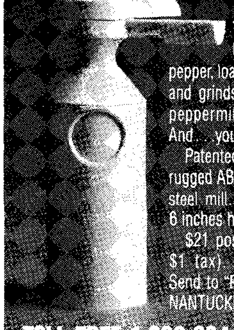

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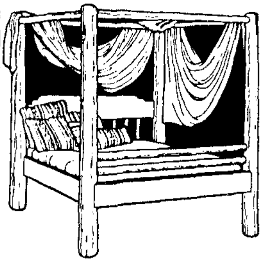

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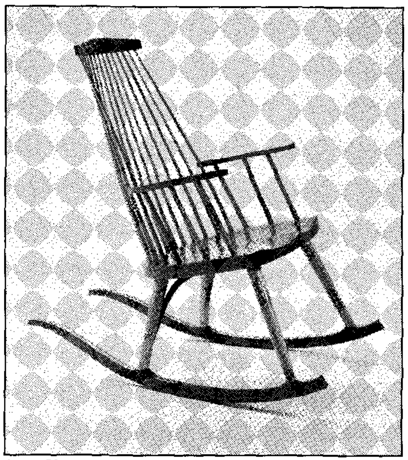
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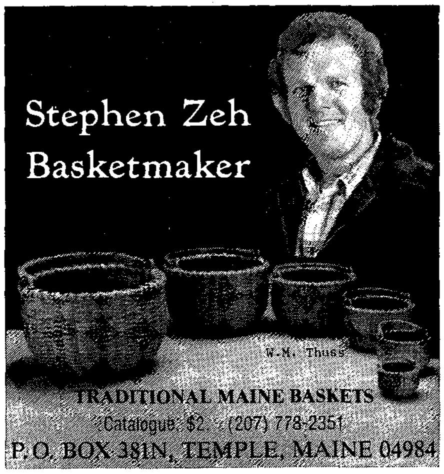

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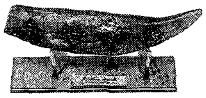

Tyrannosaurus rex Tooth

"dirty people" to do a "dirty job," North was used by them, and the job remained undone. The Contras barely survived under his tutelage—indeed, Calero had to borrow money to tide the F.D.N. over from the summer to the fall of 1986. Meanwhile, the dirt rose up and drifted around the Administration.

On July 5th of this year, Colonel North came up for sentencing. He faced a maximum penalty of ten years in prison and seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars in fines. Judge Gesell let him off with a three-year suspended sentence, two years on probation, a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in fines, and twelve hundred hours of community service. Possibly, the judge was not impressed by North's seriousness as a criminal. In pronouncing the sentence, he reiterated the jurors' view that North was not a leader but "a low-ranking subordinate," who presumably was not entirely responsible for what he did. Gesell did suggest, however, that, given a prison term, North might turn himself into a national martyr, and this would not do him, or anyone else, any good.

Like the hearings, and like the trial itself, the sentence was another perfect anticlimax to the Iran-Contra affair. It also contained an irony to top off the rest. Judge Gesell said he had thought long and hard about the particular community service he was assigning. North would be working for a drug-education-and-rehabilitation program in the inner city of Washington, D.C. The job would involve no fund-raising and no public speaking; it would be a complex administrative task that the judge said would call upon North's considerable "organizational and administrative skills." The punishment, in other words, fitted the crime in a way that not even Judge Gesell understood. Of course, for the sake of the inner city it was to be hoped that North would not get his mission backward again. —FRANCES FITZGERALD

• •

THE NEEDLE: FOR A FRIEND WHO DISAPPEARED

Just one more time. Only one—
the small rose of blood blooming in the syringe—
one to compel haunted speech to the lips,
sure. Some immense seconds pass. Dusk's
prow slowly glides right up Avenue B;
the young Schumann's two personalities
continue discussing each other
in the diary. Your eyes
move to the warning
on a pack of cigarettes—
good thing you're not pregnant!
Still no speech, but no pain either,
no New York,
nothing,
sweet.
You happen to know that you're home.
And how simple it was, and how smart
to come back: in the moon
on its oak branch
the owl slowly opens
its eyes like a just severed head
that hears its name called out,
and spreads its wings
and disappears;
and the moth leaves the print
of its lips on the glass, lights
on the lamp's stillwarm bulb,
the napper's forehead,
his hand, where it rests
down the chair arm,
fingers
slowly opening.

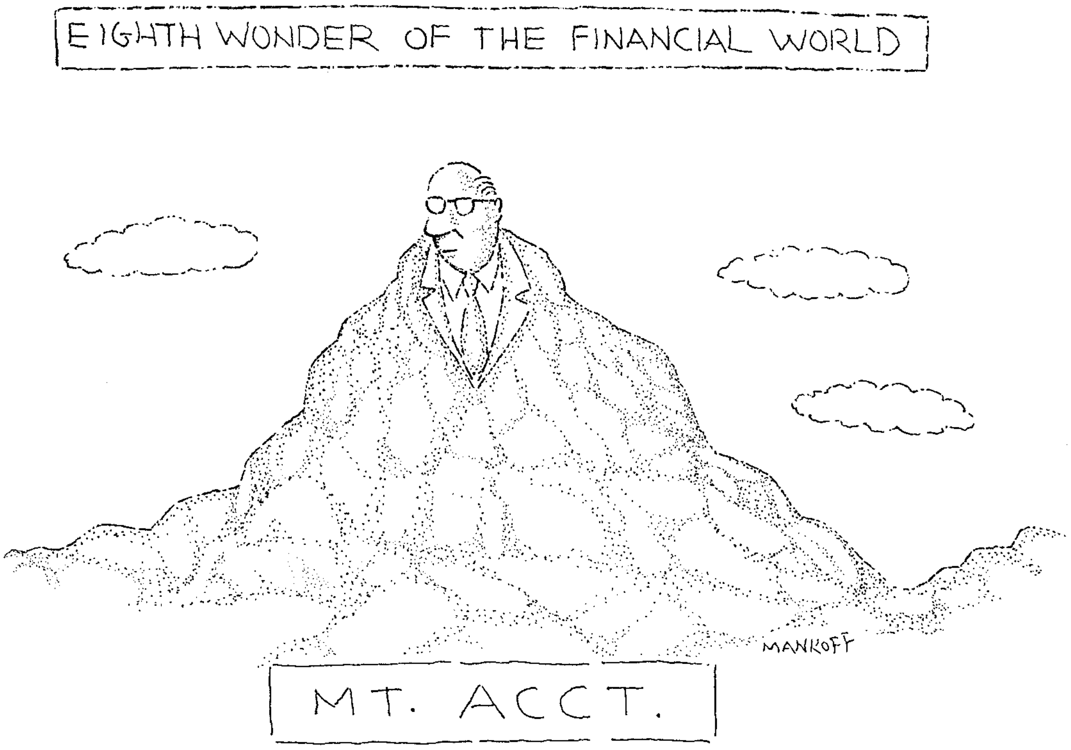
—FRANZ WRIGHT

THE SPORTING SCENE

MR. KRAMER AND MR. BECKER

THIS past June and July, American television carried the French Open, at Stade Roland Garros, in Auteuil, near Paris, and the Wimbledon championships, at the All England Club, on the edge of London, much more generously than it ever had before. These two tournaments were replete with thrilling matches—seventeen-year-old Michael Chang's victories over Ivan Lendl and Stefan Edberg in winning the French Open; the surprising triumph in the women's final of the French by the seventeen-year-old Spanish player, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, over the defending champion, Steffi Graf; and a succession of rousing matches at Wimbledon, climaxed by Boris Becker's masterly play against Edberg in the men's final—and everywhere you went in this country you bumped into people talking exuberantly about what they had seen on the screen. In my own case, I reached such a high that I subsequently reread two tennis books that I admire greatly—"A Study in Gray," a collection of articles by the late David Gray, of the *Guardian*, and "The Game," Jack Kramer's richly detailed autobiography, written with Frank Deford and published in 1979. At the end of July, I was able to arrange to get together with Kramer in Los Angeles, which has been his home town since his early teens. No one knows more about tennis, and its endless ramifications, than Kramer.

Kramer, who turned sixty-eight on the first of August, lives, with his wife, Gloria, in a large house in the Bel Air district of Los Angeles, which they bought thirty-eight years ago. It has four bedrooms on the ground floor, two on the second floor, and five bathrooms, and so it had the necessary Lebensraum for bringing up their family of five sons. (The Kramers' sons have long been out of the house. The eldest, David, who is forty-two, is the tennis director of the Palm Valley Country Club, in Palm Desert, in the Palm Springs area. The second, John Albert Kramer, Jr., is forty and is in his twelfth year as a ranger at Glacier National Park. The middle son, Robert, who is thirty-nine, is the executive director of the Southern California Tennis Association. The fourth son, Michael, who is thirty-four, heads up Kramermade Sports Surfaces, a company that primarily installs tennis courts which have a special synthetic surface of polyurethane leaves woven into a base of synthetic sand a little over a half inch in depth. Ronald, the youngest son, who is now thirty-three, set out to become a professional golfer, but after accepting the hard fact that he didn't have sufficient ability to make it on the P.G.A. Tour he went to work at Los Serranos Golf Club, near Chino, which is about a forty-minute drive east of Los Angeles. His father, who has been connected with Los Serranos since 1953, became its sole owner in 1961. Los Serranos' two public courses are spread over rolling terrain that is set off by tall groves of eucalyptus trees. The Southern California Golf Association regularly uses the South course, which is seven thousand yards long, as a site for qualifying for the California State Amateur championship. Ronnie is currently the club's merchandise manager.)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JOHN ALBERT KRAMER was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 1921, the only child of David and Daisy Kramer. Mrs. Kramer came from Arizona. Mr. Kramer's family had moved, in the late eighteen-eighties, from Cumberland, Maryland, to Las Vegas, a busy railroad center in those days, and he broke in as a crew-caller for the Union Pacific Railroad when he was eleven. When he grew up, he became a brakeman on the Union Pacific. That meant being on call for thirty-six hours and off for forty, so he was able to spend a good deal of time with his son. He built a pole-vaulting pit for him. He played tennis with him. He watched him play football, basketball, and baseball with the other kids. When Jack was in the seventh grade, the family moved temporarily to San Bernardino, east of Los Angeles, while Mr. Kramer underwent a year of advanced railroad training. They then moved back to Las Vegas, but shortly afterward Mr. Kramer was sent to San Bernardino again for further special training. A tennis exhibition that Jack attended at the Pomona County Fair in the spring

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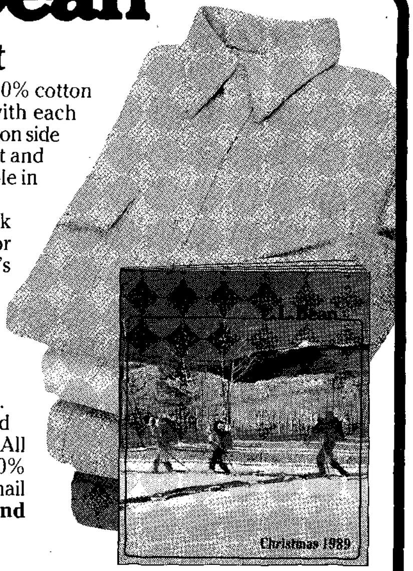

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of 1935, when he was thirteen, made a deep impression on him. Ellsworth Vines, then the best player in the world, played an exhibition match against Lester Stoefen, a young Californian, and the fabled Bill Tilden played George Lott, a rising star from Chicago. Vines seized the boy's imagination as he whistled aces into the corners of the service boxes and ripped flat forehand drives down the lines. Kramer decided on the spot that tennis was the game for him. Not long afterward, his father's training period at San Bernardino came to a close, and he was scheduled to return to Las Vegas, but after thinking things over he elected to take a less important job with the Union Pacific in Los Angeles, so that his son would have the opportunity to grow up in a tennis-oriented atmosphere. The Kramers found a house in Montebello, a community on the eastern edge of Los Angeles.

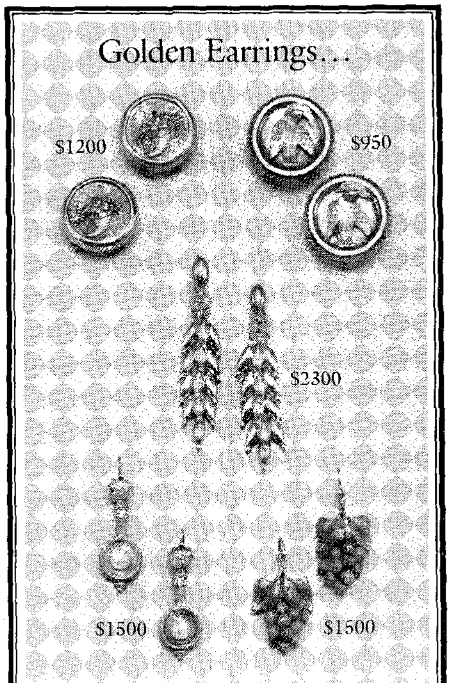
Kramer played in his first tournament, the Dudley Cup, in Santa Monica, in 1935. He was beaten in his first match. Many of the entrants were appreciably more advanced than Kramer. Among them were kids named Joe Hunt, Ted Schroeder, and Bobby Riggs. Not long after this, Mr. Kramer found his son a good teaching professional, Dick Skeen. Skeen used as his headquarters a private court in Altadena, just beyond Pasadena. Each Saturday, Kramer's mother drove him to Altadena and back, a round trip of thirty-eight miles. Skeen, an excellent player in his middle-twenties, had the ability to handle as many as ten pupils in a group session. He charged five dollars for the Saturday-morning session, in which he worked with groups of two pupils at a time and managed to give each pupil some individual attention. He did a great deal for Kramer: he changed his forehand from the Continental to the Eastern grip, taught him how to brush up on the ball and control it with overspin, and gave him a sound over-all sense of tennis. In the spring of 1936, Kramer again entered the Dudley Cup and won it. Next, he played a tournament in Ojai, in which he didn't fare as well, but attracted the attention of Perry Jones, the top man in the Southern California Tennis Association, which was then the most important regional association in the country. A stickler for good manners, proper dress, and polite language, Jones liked the way Kramer conducted himself, and he correctly gauged the boy's immense potential. He arranged for Kramer to become a junior member of the Los Angeles Tennis Club, and paid his entrance fee of twenty-five dollars. "Your family will have to pay the dues, which are two dollars and fifty cents a month," he explained. "You should come every day. I'll help arrange games for you with the right competition."

In the summer of 1936, Jones gave him fifty dollars and sent him east to Culver, Indiana, to see what he could do in the National Boys' championship, for players fifteen and under. His father gave him a hundred dollars and a signed blank check in case of emergency. Kramer won both the singles and the doubles, and he didn't have to cash the check. Jones continued to give him helpful advice. For example, he used to tell him, "All close balls are good. If you remember that, you'll never cheat an opponent. In tournament tennis, you don't question a call by the umpire or a linesman. You continue to play. And don't *think* too much when you play a big match. Just try to hit the ball well. Oh, yes, keep your sneakers clean."

Cliff Roche, a middle-aged hydraulic engineer who was a member of the Los Angeles Tennis Club, was also a tremendous help to Kramer. When Kramer joined the club, he was strictly a backcourt player. After Coach Roche, as he was called, watched him lose a match by taking the ball two yards behind the baseline during rallies, he moved Kramer forward to the baseline and impressed on him that this was where good players positioned themselves. Roche was an advocate of what he called percentage tennis. The first requisite was to hold serve, and the most important percentage shot was the second serve. He advised Kramer to come in on the first short ball during a rally, slice a fairly deep return, and follow it in to net. On any crucial point, he believed, the best tactic was to find a good way to come to net and make your opponent try to pass you. In addition, Keith Gledhill, the professional at the West Side Tennis Club, worked with Kramer—he was by then a tall kid with gangling arms—on developing a strong service. "Keith told me I had to have a longer drop on my backswing in order to have a longer arc coming forward and a greater transfer of weight," Kramer recalls. "This increased the pace of my serve enormously. I learned to hit a relatively fast serve with sidespin or overspin, and I developed into a rather good serve-and-volleyer." Kramer was also fortunate in being able to play a good deal with Ellsworth Vines at the Beverly Hills Tennis Club in the autumn of 1937. Vines, who had won the United States singles in 1931 and 1932 and the Wimbledon singles in 1932 before turning professional, had one of the great forehands of all time. It was based on the correct transfer of weight, and Kramer, who was observant, picked this up. As a teen-ager at the Los Angeles Tennis Club, he also got to play regularly with Bill Tilden, who was about forty-five at the time. Even in his mid-forties, Tilden preferred to play five-set matches. He simply loved tennis.

Kramer was not one of those teenage wonders who carry off championships at an indecently early age. He never won our National Juniors, for players eighteen and under, and, in fact, he had more than his share of rough breaks in his early years. In 1942, after not losing a match all season, he had an attack of appendicitis on the eve of the United States championship, in Forest Hills, Queens, seven miles east of Manhattan, and had to withdraw. Schroeder, his closest friend, won the singles that year. In 1943, after joining the Coast Guard, Kramer was given a leave that enabled him to play at Forest Hills. On the eve of his semifinal match, he came down with food poisoning. He played the match anyway, and managed to wobble past Francisco (Pancho) Segura, of Ecuador, but lost the final in four sets to Joe Hunt, then a Navy lieutenant. Kramer became an officer in the Coast Guard in March, 1944, and shortly afterward he married Gloria Spangenberg, a tall brunette from Minnesota, who was working in Los Angeles for the Bank of America. Then he shipped out and joined an L.S.T. attached to the Seventh Fleet, and saw action in seven engagements, including the first day of the landing on Leyte, in the Philippines. He was discharged from the service in March of 1946.

Great Britain, one of the countries that had been hit the hardest during



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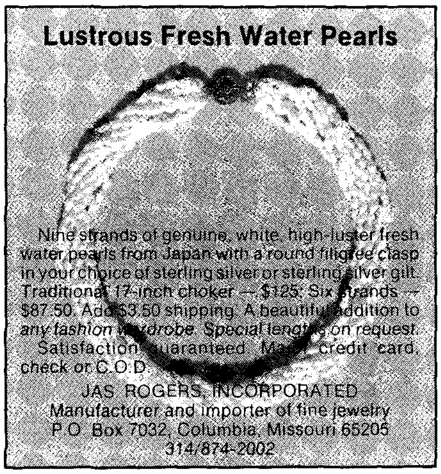

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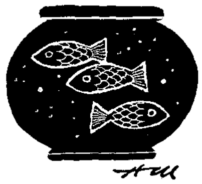
the war, wanted to put the grim years behind it as quickly as possible, and in 1946 the All England Club set about reviving Wimbledon, the world's most distinguished tennis championship. Kramer went over on the Queen Mary. Six feet one and a half inches tall, he weighed a hundred and sixty-eight pounds. He was a fine-looking young man, with clear blue eyes, regular features, and crew-cut blond hair. Having been in good form that year, he was regarded as a likely winner at Wimbledon. In the tune-up tournament at the Queen's Club, in London, he developed blisters on his racquet hand. He was used to wrapping his right hand around a piece of leather at the bottom of the racquet handle—the butt piece, it is called—but the manufacturers had discontinued adding the butt piece after the war. In order to give his hand a chance to heal, Kramer decided to default his semifinal match at Queen's. By the third round of Wimbledon, however, his racquet hand was again badly blistered. The blisters had a good deal to do with his loss in five sets in that round to Jaroslav Drobny, of Czechoslovakia. Yvon Petra, of France, won the singles that year, taking the final from Geoff Brown, of Australia, who had beaten Drobny in the semifinals.

That September, Kramer's run of bad luck finally ended at Forest Hills, when he won his first major singles championship by defeating Tom Brown, of California, in the final, 9–7, 6–3, 6–0. At Kooyong Stadium, in Melbourne, where the United States won the Davis Cup back from Australia, 5–0, Kramer didn't lose a set in his singles matches with John Bromwich and Dinny Pails, of Australia, and he and Schroeder took the doubles in straight sets. He had clearly become the best amateur player in the world. He was fast around the court, he packed a good deal of power, and he had a stable temperament. His big slice serve broke so sharply in the deuce court that its bounce frequently swerved well beyond the doubles alley. In the ad court, he could count on a big American-twist serve, which kicked viciously to the receiver's left. He regularly followed his serve in to net, ready to volley the return. In time, he developed one of the most reliable second serves in the game. He avoided long rallies by moving into the forecourt as quickly as possible behind the most effective approach shot since Don Budge's in the thirties. His overhead was completely reliable. All this added up to an ultra-aggressive style of play, which came to be known as the Big Game.

Kramer was expected to have little trouble winning Wimbledon in 1947, and it worked out that way. He lost only one set, to Dinny Pails, of Australia, and in the final he overwhelmed Tom Brown, of California, 6–1, 6–3, 6–2. The stage was now set for him to arrange a playing schedule with Jack Harris, the promoter who had run professional tennis since 1934. Kramer would play Bobby Riggs, who had captured Wimbledon in 1939 and Forest Hills in 1939 and 1941. Riggs had, in effect, become the World Professional Champion when he defeated Budge twenty-four matches to twenty-two in an abbreviated tour in 1946. Before the Riggs-Kramer tour was ready to roll, Kramer had two more bridges to cross. The first was a successful defense of the Davis Cup against Australia, at Forest Hills. He and Schroeder lost the doubles but both won their singles against Bromwich and Pails. Kramer was expected to sail through our national championship, but things didn't go as smoothly as expected. In the semifinals, he met Drobny. Their match started in the Grandstand Court, because Frank Parker and Bromwich were still waging a protracted battle in the other semifinal in the Stadium Court. Drobny won the first set, 6–4, after breaking Kramer's serve. Early in the second set, he broke his serve again. At that juncture, Parker won the fifth set from Bromwich, and the Drobny-Kramer match was moved into the Stadium Court. Drobny was leading, 3–2, with his big serve coming up. In the sixth game, Kramer fought his way to ad. On the next point, after running around Drobny's second serve, he mis-hit his return off the racquet frame, but the ball landed just inside the far sideline for a fortunate placement. Drobny proceeded to lose that set, and Kramer went on to win the match, 3–6, 6–3, 6–0, 6–1. In the final, Kramer had an even worse scare. Against Parker, a touch player with a great backhand, he dropped the first two sets, 4–6, 2–6.



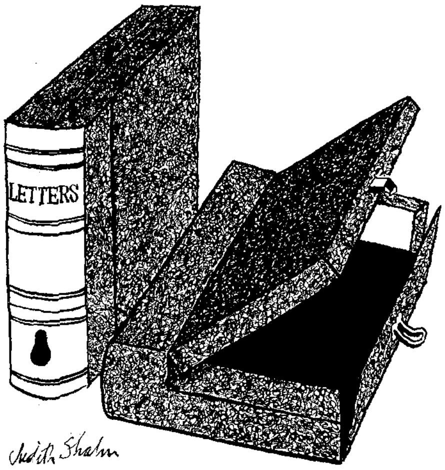
Then he managed to regather his resolve, and he ran through the last three sets with the loss of only four games. Kramer today regards the Parker match as the most crucial he ever played. "My whole career as a professional depended on winning it," he said when we talked.

THE first match of the Riggs-Kramer tour was played on December 26, 1947, a Sunday night, at Madison Square Garden, in New York. It had started to snow early in the day, and by evening no surface transportation was available, so Riggs and Kramer walked crosstown through the storm from the Lexington Hotel, on Lexington Avenue, to the Garden, on Eighth Avenue. To their amazement, a crowd of 15,114 people made it to the Garden. Another surprise was that Riggs was the winner, 6–2, 10–8, 4–6, 6–4. Two nights later, they played in Pittsburgh, best two of three sets, and Riggs also won that match, 8–6, 6–1. "I thought I had a game that would beat Riggs, particularly indoors," Kramer told me. "I wasn't expecting that Bobby's offense would be as good as it was and that he would have such excellent anticipation. On top of that, he forced me to give up my wide slice serve into the forehand court. He stood in for my slice, took it on the rise, and either blocked it sharply down the line or slammed it crosscourt. I still wanted to come in on my serve. 'How do I get eight or nine of ten first serves in?' I kept asking myself. The solution was to take a bit of speed off a first serve hit deep down the middle or down the right side of the service box. I hit those serves with eighty or eighty-five per cent of my usual speed, and that became my first serve. It also became my second serve."

After their first twenty-nine matches, Kramer was ahead with fifteen victories to Riggs' fourteen. They split their next two matches, in Los Angeles. As they headed back east, Riggs let his attention wander away from tennis. Simultaneously, Kramer's service kept improving. Taking over almost complete command, he won fifty-three of their last fifty-eight matches.

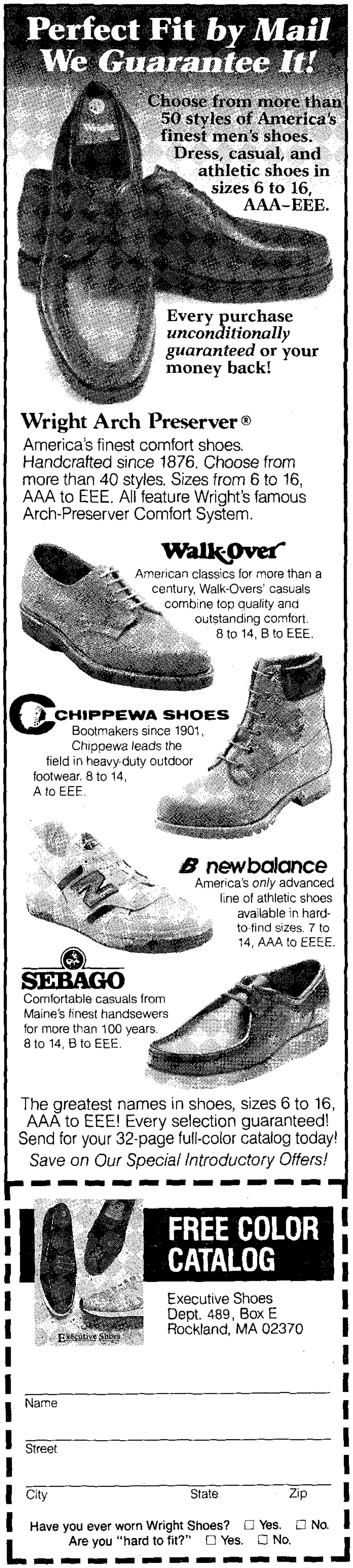
Riggs acted as the promoter of Kramer's tour with Richard (Pancho) Gonzales, in 1949-50. A lean, moody, handsome native of Los Angeles, who stood six feet three and a half, Gonzales had won Forest Hills in 1948 and 1949. Only twenty-one, he had a wicked first serve and a second serve that was only a fraction slower. "I won our opening match, in Madison Square Garden," Kramer recalls. "The following night, in Chicago, Gonzales was superb and pulled out a deuced third set for the match. We then had some pretty damn close battles that I was able to win. When I got ahead of him nine matches to two, I think Pancho lost his confidence. Basically, he lacked discipline and didn't know how to take care of himself. He would arrive late in a new town and try to take a nap in the hotel in the afternoon. He'd be awakened by a call from the desk, rush for a cab to the auditorium, and maybe grab a hot dog. During the breaks between games, I drank hot tea. Pancho would throw down big containers of iced Coca-Cola. The actual difference between Gonzales then and in his great years, starting in 1954, was his maturity. He also had the biggest serve I ever played against, and he could place it anywhere he wanted to."

In the summer of 1950, Kramer's career as a player was threatened by a form of arthritis in his back and right shoulder. Dr. Omar Fareed, his internist, prescribed cortisone, a drug that had just been brought out, and it worked wonders. With no other challenger looming on the horizon, Kramer, with Riggs again serving as promoter, toured with Pancho Segura. That year, "Gorgeous Gussie" Moran played a preliminary match against Pauline Betz Addie, who was a far superior athlete. The tour did not go well in any respect. At about this time, Kramer took over as the promoter of the pro tour. In 1953, he made the third, and final, defense of his crown, against Frank Sedgman, of Australia. Sedgman, who had won the Australian championship in 1949 and 1950, Forest Hills in 1951 and 1952, and Wimbledon in 1952, received a guarantee of seventy-five thousand dollars, which was big money in those days. The Kramer-Sedgman tour played to almost half a million fans in North America. In the end, Kramer won fifty-four matches to Sedgman's forty-one. "Sedg's serve wasn't in the same class as Gonzales'," Kramer says, "but he was quicker than any other player I ever saw when it came to putting a volley away."



In 1954, Kramer's arthritis, which had been bothering him again, became so debilitating that he stepped down as a singles player and gave his primary attention to running the tour. Tony Trabert, the young American who had won Wimbledon and Forest Hills in 1955, toured against Gonzales in 1956, and Ken Rosewall, the "Little Master," from Sydney, played Gonzales in 1957. Lew Hoad, Rosewall's old running mate, signed with Kramer after winning Wimbledon in 1957, and Kramer devoted the rest of the year to a world tour with Hoad, Rosewall, Segura, and himself, which was designed to get Hoad ready for Gonzales. In 1958, Gonzales and Hoad, two of the hardest hitters in the history of the game, played one superlative match after another. Hoad won eight of thirteen matches held in Australia at the start of the tour, and he took their American opener, in San Francisco. Gonzales then won a terrific match in Los Angeles and, on its heels, another thriller, in New York. Hoad came back to take nine of their next eleven meetings. Then they played a match on a cool night at The Tennis Club, in Palm Springs. Hoad woke up the next morning with a stiff back. In the weeks that followed, he tried all kinds of remedies, but his back was never a hundred per cent right again. Gonzales ended the tour with fifty-one victories to thirty-six for Hoad.

Over the next three years, Kramer signed a large number of amateur stars, but none of them could measure up to Gonzales, Hoad, Sedgman, and Rosewall. Interest in the professional tour waned. Observing the scene with characteristic astuteness, Kramer decided to give up promoting professional tennis. The tour had had its day. When Rod Laver, of Australia, turned professional after winning his Grand Slam of the four major championships,



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in 1962, Laver set things up with Rosewall and Hoad and barnstormed with them.

Kramer had many other interests to occupy his attention and energy. Working with Bud Palmer, he started telecasting our national championships from Forest Hills in 1952. Then, in 1960, he joined Dan Maskell, the voice of Wimbledon, in his telecasts from the All England Club. Their styles fused very effectively. Thanks to his ownership of the busy Los Serranos golf courses and his royalties on the sales of the Jack Kramer Autograph racquet, which the Wilson Sporting Goods Company had brought out in 1948, Kramer had no financial problems. (The Kramer Autograph had quickly become the game's best-selling racquet, and it remained so until 1981, when, with the advent of composite frames, production of it was halted, and it was replaced by a more contemporary model, the Jack Kramer Pro Staff. By that time, sales of the Kramer Autograph had passed ten million, an all-time record.) Kramer was never far from the heart of tennis. When open tennis—open to both professionals and amateurs, and officially recognized by the game's ruling body, the International Lawn Tennis Federation—at length arrived, in 1968, Kramer and his friend Vic Braden, a teaching professional from California, helped to resolve the problems that followed by devising, in 1970, a structure known as the Grand Prix, which the I.L.T.F. would supervise, and which called for an annual series of associated tournaments to be played on the basis of a cumulative point system—a system that would encourage the best players to compete regularly, in order to reap large bonus prizes at the end of the year and also to qualify for a big-money tournament, the Masters, which would bring the season to a suitable close. The Grand Prix turned out to be highly successful. In 1971, for instance, the Grand Prix winner received only twenty-five thousand dollars; in 1978, he received three hundred thousand.

Kramer had no trouble keeping busy. In 1972, he was elected a member of the newly founded Association of Tennis Professionals, and that year he was asked to become the A.T.P.'s executive director. Early in 1976, he gave up that post and became a member of the board of the Men's International Professional Tennis Council, which had taken over the administration of the Grand Prix tournament tour. (The M.I.P.T.C.'s board was made up of three members of the A.T.P.; three members of the International Tennis Federation, the successor to the I.L.T.F.; and three Grand Prix tournament directors. In 1969, Kramer had become the tournament director of the Pacific Southwest championship, which is held annually at the Los Angeles Tennis Center, the second week after the U.S. Open.) Kramer resigned from the board of the M.I.P.T.C. in 1984, the year his son Robert succeeded him as the tournament director of the Pacific Southwest, now the Volvo Tennis/Los Angeles. Although Kramer claims that he officially retired from tennis administration in 1986, he is as hopelessly fascinated by the game as ever, and he remains exceedingly active as a member of the U.S.T.A.'s Olympics Committee, Junior Advisory Committee, and International Tennis Hall of Fame Committee.

DURING my sessions with Kramer, who is in great shape and looks years younger than his age, I asked him a great many questions. He always gave positive, clarifying replies. Here are a few examples.

On the effect of the new larger racquets, with their graphite and other composite frames: "The new racquets can create angles that you almost can't run down. I'm thinking of Steffi Graf's forehand, or times when Boris Becker comes over the ball and hits it with a good, lifting follow-through. Stefan Edberg does an awful lot in returning second serves. Edberg's character builder was beating Becker and his other opponents in the French championship this year. It's demoralizing to lose to a youngster like Michael Chang, who beat Edberg in the final of the French, but I think Edberg went off the court saying, 'Maybe I played too aggressively. I wore myself out. But then, too, the kid had destiny on his side.' "

On Andre Agassi's long-range prospects: "Agassi is a rare talent on a fast court. For a fellow who is not a very big man, he generates tremendous power, and he's got good control of both his forehand and his backhand. He's lacking in other respects. He's not comfortable at net, although he's trying to get away from the drive-volley with the Western-grip forehand, and block the ball with more of a conventional Eastern grip. Another thing: when Agassi serves and comes in, he really doesn't seem to know what grip he's using. In the match he lost to Carl-Uwe Steeb in Munich on the last day of the Davis Cup semifinal this July, he was in control from the backcourt, and all of a sudden he decided to be a serve-and-volley player. For some reason, he changed a winning game."

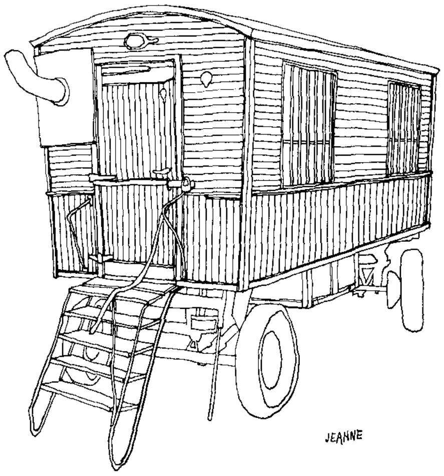
On Chang and his prospects: "At fifteen, Chang was the best player of that age I've ever seen. I thought I was a good player at fifteen. When I saw him play two years ago, I said to myself, 'This guy could have beaten me 6–0, 6–0.' Like Agassi, he plays deep on the baseline, but he has a greater ability to change his game than the other young players I've watched. He knows his limitations. When he lost to Timmy Mayotte in straight sets in the round of sixteen at Wimbledon, I thought it was because Mayotte took over not only on his own serve but on Chang's second serve. Secondly, Chang doesn't have the equipment right now to take advantage of the situation when he hits a deep ball and then has a chance to play a short ball. He really doesn't have a sound approach shot off either side. Thirdly, he can put the overheads away, but he really doesn't have a strong volley game. I sense that what Chang will do, what with the dedication I've seen, is to retain his great defense, improve his second serve, become more competent in handling the short ball coming in, and mature into a sound volleyer."

In reply to my asking his thoughts on Björn Borg's position in tennis history: "Borg was the first champion whose game was based on unconventional grips and strokes. His two-handed backhand was derived from his left-handed hockey shot. He had a topspin forehand, but not a classical one, where the player meets the ball out in front and brushes up on it. He let the ball drop very low before he whipped up and over it. He later developed a one-hand slice backhand that was very useful to him on grass. Borg was essentially a counterpuncher. He was fast, quick, very strong, and exceedingly patient. He moved his opponents around until he found an opening or forced an error. I can see him winning his six French championships. He said to his opponents, in effect, 'Come to net and I'll pass you. Stay back and I'll outlast you.' He came in just enough to hold his service, and he could play all day. I think it was his competitiveness and courage that won him his five Wimbledons."

On why Australia stopped developing world-class players: "In the nineteen-sixties, automobiles and television began to become part of the Australian way of life. Cars buy freedom, and freedom means girls and activities. The kids lost their zest for sport. Well, today Australians are thinking tennis again. The new National Tennis Centre, in Flinders Park, in Melbourne, has caught their imagination. They love its retractable roof. The whole project is so attractive, so big-league, it's like Wimbledon to them. A great many young Australian athletes will be taking up tennis."

On the condition of the grass at Wimbledon this year: "It was in very good condition—the best I've seen it for quite a while. I think they'll have grass at Wimbledon for at least another ten years."

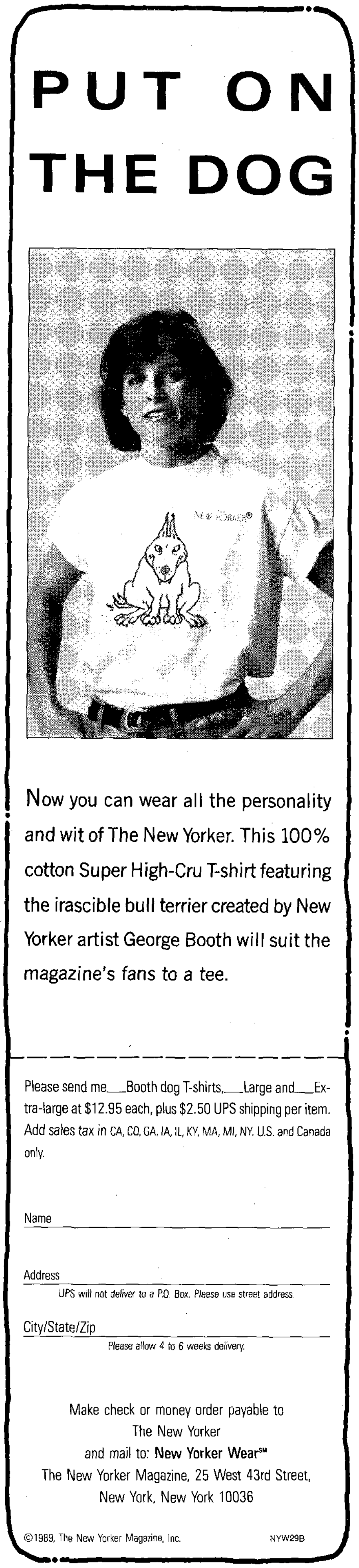
On the new A.T.P. Tour—Hamilton Jordan is its chief executive officer, and its headquarters are in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida—which will take over the operation of the professional tennis tour beginning in January, 1990: "I'm a little worried that the new A.T.P. Tour won't be able to do the job that should be done. There will be twenty-one or so tournaments on the top level of the A.T.P.'s schedule next year. These don't include the four Grand Slam championships. The leading players have to play in only eleven or so A.T.P. tournaments. This short schedule makes it possible for them to play more high-paying exhibitions than they formerly could. I think the outstanding four or five players—and they already make more money than any other athletes except a few boxing champions—have an obligation to play a full international schedule and allow professional tennis the opportunity to negotiate an over-all contract with television. That's where the big money really is."



On Lendl, the No. 1 player in the world during most of the last five years: "Whereas Becker and Edberg are hell-bent on going to the net, because they've got volley equipment, Lendl generally stays in the backcourt, because he has more control from there and a good enough serve to keep his opponents from attacking it. Lendl has such a strong backhand grip on his serve that he can't switch easily to a forehand-volley grip. On his backhand, he volleys O.K."

On the five best doubles teams he has seen—Kramer felt that he could not select the top five, ten, or fifteen singles players without leaving out somebody who deserved to be included—these are his choices, in no particular order: "Adrian Quist and Jack Bromwich. Don Budge and Gene Mako. Roy Emerson and Fred Stolle. John Newcombe and Tony Roche. John McEnroe and anybody."

THIS summer, the U.S. Open, which was held during the two-week stretch between Monday, August 28th, and Sunday, September 10th, at the National Tennis Center, in Flushing Meadow, next door to Shea Stadium, in Queens, New York, was blessed with perhaps the finest over-all weather it has enjoyed since the championships were moved there, in 1978, from the West Side Tennis Club, in Forest Hills, some three miles away. Throughout the Open, a large number of thrilling matches were played. These included a spirited battle in the men's doubles final, in which McEnroe and his Australian partner, Mark Woodforde, faced the experienced American team of Ken Flach and Robert Seguso; a hard-fought women's semifinal between Graf and Gabriela Sabatini, of Argentina; and an absolutely thrilling men's singles final, in which the three-time Wimbledon champion, twenty-one-year-old Boris Becker, of West Germany, defeated Ivan Lendl, the twenty-nine-year-old transplanted Czechoslovakian, who now lives in Greenwich,



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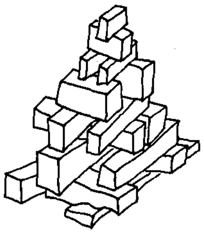
Connecticut, and on the eve of the Open was ranked No. 1 in the world.

During the championship, we had ample occasion to observe that Becker, the red-headed West German, has matured into a thoughtful, self-possessed young man, wise beyond his years. His command of English has improved immeasurably, and the value of this new fluency cannot be overstated in the way it has helped the tennis world get to know what a fine grown-up young man Becker is today. For example, he was completely at ease during his acceptance speech in the Stadium Court after his strenuous battle with Lendl. Replying to the cheers of more than twenty thousand fans, he asked, "What can I say? It's probably the best moment in my tennis life right now. To win Wimbledon and the U.S. Open, it's just unbelievable for me."

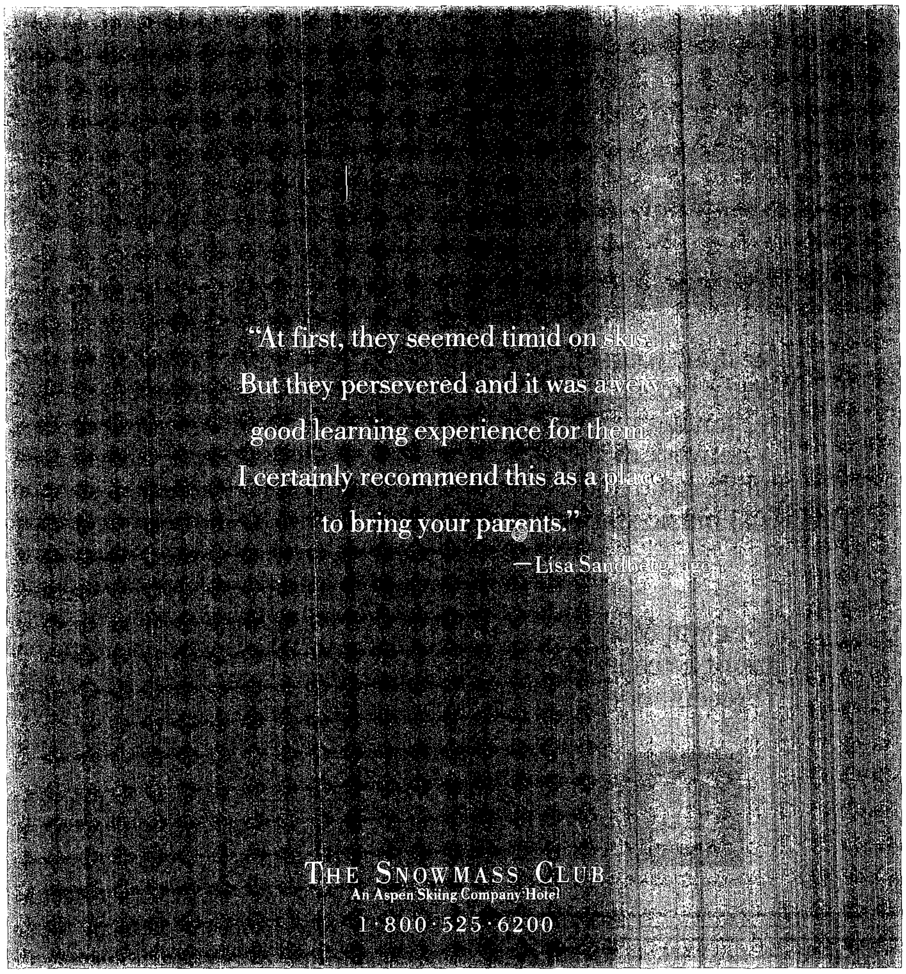


The finalists in the men's singles and the women's singles had to survive six rounds of matches. This year, Lendl was again seeded No. 1 and placed at the top of the thirty-two players in the first quarter of the draw. Chang was seeded seventh and occupied the bottom spot in the first quarter. Edberg, the runner-up both in the French and at Wimbledon, was seeded third and placed at the top of the second quarter. Agassi, coming off a disappointing campaign, was seeded sixth and placed at the bottom of the second quarter. The 1988 U.S. Open champion, Wilander, of Sweden, who has suffered through a very poor season, was seeded fifth and placed at the top of the third quarter, and McEnroe, who has played increasingly sound tennis this year, was seeded fourth and occupied the bottom spot in the third quarter. Becker, the No. 2 seed, was placed at the bottom of the fourth quarter, and the top spot in that quarter went to the eighth seed, Brad Gilbert, of Piedmont, California, who had been the hottest player on the professional tour this summer. Gilbert had reached the final of the tournament in Washington, D.C., in late July and then, during the next three weeks, had swept the tournaments at Stratton Mountain, in Vermont; Livingston, in New Jersey; and Cincinnati. In Cincinnati, he had eliminated Becker in the semifinals and had made it look easy. He had the skill to take the pace off Becker's hard-hit ground strokes, and he frequently passed him at net with angled backhands whipped down the alley and back into Becker's court. On the first day of the Open, Gilbert had the bad luck to suffer a severely upset stomach, and he was knocked out of the tournament in five sets by Todd Witsken, an attractive player from Carmel, Indiana, who had earned a quick moment of fame in the 1986 Open by ousting Jimmy Connors in the third round.

The first Tuesday was a quiet day at Flushing Meadow, but Wednesday was filled with exciting action. McEnroe, playing his second-round match late in the afternoon in the Stadium Court, was defeated, 6–4, 4–6, 6–3, 7–5, by Paul Haarhuis, who at the time was ranked a hundred-and-fifteenth in the world and had to qualify for one of the open places in the field during the weekend before the championship started. McEnroe's game lacked its usual bite. He broke Haarhuis's serve only once in the four sets. As for Haarhuis, he not only served effectively but played steadily and well from the backcourt. Haarhuis, a tall, slender young Dutchman, who recently earned a degree in economics from Florida State University, went on to win his third-round match with Miguel Nido, of Puerto Rico, before falling to Aaron Krickstein, of Grosse Pointe, Michigan, in the fourth round. In the evening session on Wednesday, Wilander was eliminated, 5–7, 6–3, 1–6, 6–1, 6–4, by Pete Sampras, an eighteen-year-old from California with lots of court speed and flash. Sampras went on to beat Jaime Yzaga, of Peru, but he was no match in the fourth round for Jay Berger, a hard-hitting Floridian.

Early on the Wednesday that Wilander and McEnroe were defeated, a major upset seemed to be in the making. In the first match that day in the Stadium Court, Becker came up against Derrick Rostagno, of Brentwood, California, who was ranked sixty-fifth on the A.T.P. computer. After taking the first two sets, 6–1 and 7–6, Rostagno, who was serving well and volleying with imagination, held two match points when he led six points to four in the tiebreaker in the fourth set. Becker saved the first point with a crosscourt forehand that Rostagno volleyed out of court. On the second match point, Becker was a little lucky. When his forehand passing shot caught the top of the net and skipped over it, Rostagno mistimed his volley and hit it well out of court. Becker went on to win the tie-breaker, eight points to six, and he saw to it that he made few mistakes in taking the fifth set, 6–3.

The first really significant match of the championship took place on the Stadium Court on Sunday afternoon, September 3rd, when Chris Evert met Monica Seles in the fourth round. Evert had made it known this summer that she would retire from tennis after the Open, the tournament in which she became an overnight sensation in 1971. As soon as the draw was announced and a meeting between Evert and Seles in the fourth round seemed likely, their match loomed as the most dramatic clash of the championship's first week. A tall, stalky fifteen-year-old, Seles is far and away the most promising young prospect in women's tennis. Born and brought up in Yugoslavia, she showed an unusual aptitude for tennis as a child, and it prompted her parents to emigrate to this country when she was twelve, so that she could attend the highly publicized tennis academy that Nick Bollettieri runs in Bradenton, Florida. A left-hander with a two-handed backhand, Seles also has a two-handed forehand. She clouts the ball with speed and accuracy from the baseline, and she has a good serve, but she has yet to develop a forecourt game. Last year when she came up against Evert, in the Lipton tournament, in Boca Raton, Florida, she managed to win only three games, but when she played Evert this year in the Virginia Slims tournament, in Houston, she defeated her, 3–6, 6–1, 6–4. In the French Open this June, Seles got to the semifinals before losing to Graf, and she subsequently made her way to the round of sixteen at Wimbledon before again being eliminated by Graf. Youthful female phenoms are nothing new in tennis, of course. Evert was only fifteen in 1970, when she came to the attention of tennis fans by beating Margaret Smith Court, of Australia, then the top woman player in the world, in a tournament in Charlotte, North Carolina. The following year, she made her unforgettable début at Forest Hills, when, ripping the ball hard and deep, she beat four players of reputation—Edda Buding, of West Germany; Mary Ann Eisel, from Indi-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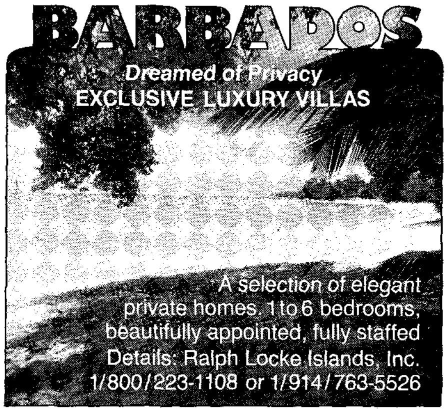

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anapolis; Françoise Durr, of France; and Lesley Hunt, of Australia—before being stopped in the semifinals by Billie Jean King. Three years later, in 1974, she won her first two major championships, the French and Wimbledon, and was on her way to amassing a total of eighteen victories in Grand Slam events. Over the last twenty years, Evert has undoubtedly been the most popular woman athlete in the world. She has had a number of assets going for her besides her ability to play first-class tennis. She has fresh good looks and a nice way about her. She is feminine and bright. Her father, a tennis coach, saw to it that she understood from an early age how basic sportsmanship is to the enjoyment of tennis. She has an inquiring mind and a mind of her own. She is good company and can be very funny when she is with people she knows well. She is the kind of person who will probably keep on growing all her life.

Throughout the early months this year, there was no consistency to the level of Evert's game. She was so unhappy with it last May that she decided to withdraw from the French Open. At the urging of friends, however, she worked hard to prepare for Wimbledon. In the quarter-finals of that championship, she was within two points of losing to Laura Golarsa, a quite ordinary player from Italy, but rallied and pulled the match out, 6–3, 2–6, 7–5. In the semifinals, she lost to Graf. It was important to her to make a respectable showing in the U.S. Open, and go out on a high note. She knew from the moment she saw the draw that the big match for her would be with Seles.

In her first three matches at Flushing Meadow, Evert played perfunctory tennis, but things went all right. She defeated Bettina Fulco, of Argentina, 6–4, 6–2, in the first round; Elise Burgin, of Baltimore, 7–5, 6–4, in the second; and Patricia Tarabini, another Argentine, in the third. She met Seles on Sunday afternoon, one of the few days when no planes shrieked over the stadium. Evert played an almost perfect match. It was apparent from the start that she was in top form. She was serving with assurance, getting to the ball fast and smoothly, and hitting her drives with a lot of authority. Seles, who moves swiftly around the court, was covering the baseline energetically and busting her two-handed ground strokes with pace and control, but Evert quickly noticed that Seles has a habit of expecting that the upcoming shot will be hit to the open side of the court, and she concluded many of their rallies by driving the ball behind her. In the first set, which Evert won 6–0, there was only one extended game—the fifth, which Evert served. After fighting off six break points, she went to ad and then took the game by walloping a forehand down the line. In the second set, Seles, staying at the baseline and increasing the pace of her hitting, broke Evert's serve in the third game. In some matches in recent years, a minor turn of events like this one has been enough to dent Evert's poise, but not on this day. She broke Seles's serve in the next game, withstood several prolonged moonball exchanges that Seles introduced in an attempt to change the tempo of their rallies, and, in the eighth game, broke Seles's serve at love to win the set and the match, 6–0, 6–2. I asked an old Evert idolater I know if he would rank her performance against Seles among the top ten of her career. "Unquestionably," he said. "No doubt about it whatsoever."

Two days later, Evert, who had been seeded No. 4 in the women's singles, met Zina Garrison, of Houston, the fifth seed. Garrison won the first set, 7–6, dominating the tie-breaker. She then took the second set, 6–2, for the match. Garrison and Evert received a prolonged round of applause as they shook hands at net and walked off to the players' benches to collect themselves and their belongings. Evert sat down on one of the benches and towelled off her face, neck, and arms. After resting a moment, she got up, zipped her racquets into their cases, and put on her sweater. She slung her clothesbag over her shoulder and carried her racquets under one arm, and, as she joined Garrison and they walked across the court to the players' exit, they smiled at each other, and Evert threw her arm around Garrison's shoulder.

DURING the second week of the championships, there were few interesting women's matches until the semifinals. On the other hand, the four men who reached the semifinals—Lendl in the top quarter, Agassi in the second, Krickstein in the third, and Becker in the fourth—did not get there without weathering at least one rough match. Lendl was lucky to get by Andrei Chesnokov, the No. 1 Russian player, in the fourth round. A sturdy twenty-three-year-old resident of Moscow, Chesnokov, who was seeded sixteenth, is a good-sized fellow with light-brown hair, a ready smile, a pleasant manner, and, I am told, a very good mind. He is perhaps the most attractive Russian player since Olga Morozova to reach the top level of world tennis. Chesnokov is essentially a baseliner, with an armory that includes a nice variety of serves, a versatile two-handed backhand, and a hard-hit topspin forehand. After dropping the opening set, he won the next two sets, 6–4 and 6–1, and appeared to have the stuff to play as many winning points as were necessary to wrap up the match. In the fourth set, Lendl began to come to net more frequently, as he should have done from the start. Serving at full blast and making better use of his punishing forehand, he gradually turned the match around, and won the fourth set, 6–4, and the fifth, 6–3. Chesnokov's coach, Tatiana Naoumko, should obviously concentrate on making him into an all-court player who is more at home in the forecourt.

In the quarter-finals, Lendl met Mayotte—a fairly confident Mayotte, who had defeated Chang in four sets in the fourth round, 7–6, 6–1, 1–6, 6–3. Chang's victory in the French Open was epochal—he became the first American to win the French since Trabert in 1955—but he has since had trouble recapturing his glistening form on the clay courts at Stade Roland Garros. At Wimbledon, where he met Mayotte in the fourth round, Chang played erratically and was never in the match. Against Mayotte at Flushing Meadow, there were two stretches in which he played bright, crisp tennis—he began the match by winning five of the first seven games, and in the third set, after his own errors and forceful hitting by Mayotte cost him the first two sets, he put it all together again and won that set, 6–1—but then he lost the fourth set and the match. At present, Chang's highly individual game rests on the deftness with which he sets up his volleys and his other passing shots, but there were many stretches in this match when he seemed to misread what needed to be done to gain control of the point being played. When Mayotte met Lendl in the quarter-finals, on

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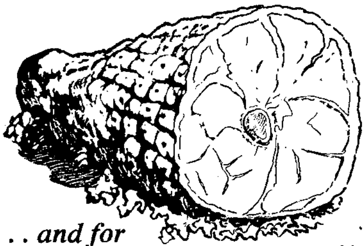

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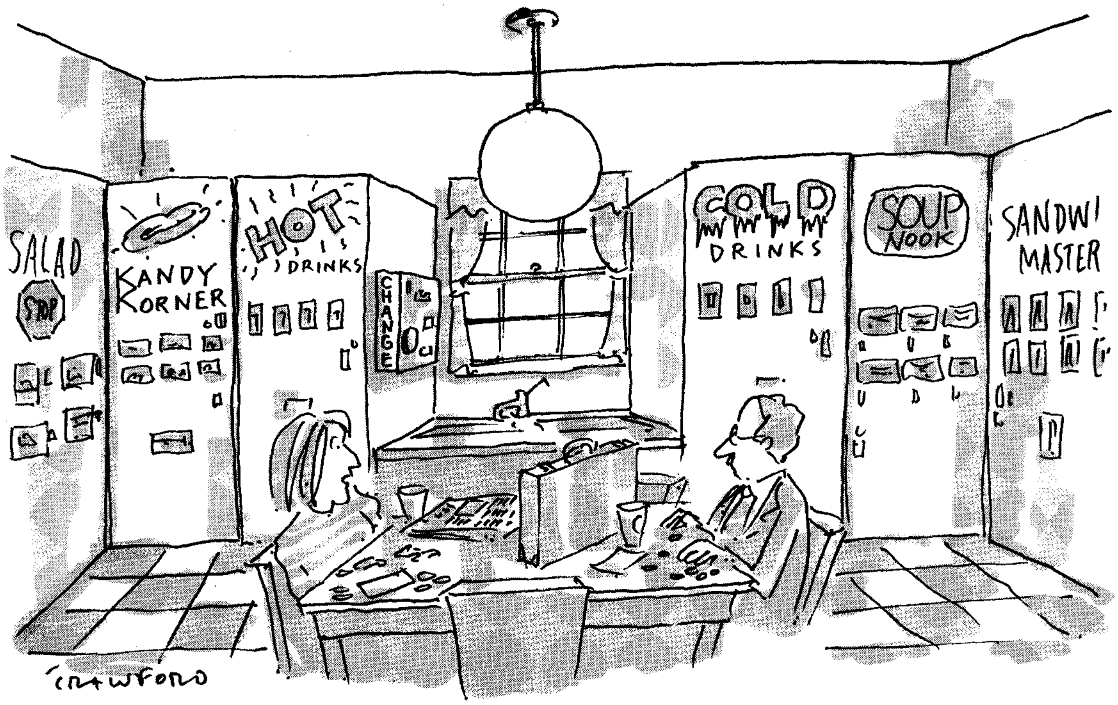

"We should reload the changer. The Franklins are coming at seven."

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Thursday night, he came up against a man who, after his match with Chesnokov, was at the top of his game. Leading 5–4 in the first set, Lendl passed Mayotte at net on point after point with no trouble whatever and won thirteen of the next fourteen games. The match was over quickly, 6–4, 6–0, 6–1.

In making his way to the semifinals in the relatively soft second quarter of the draw, Andre Agassi did not lose a set. He hit the ball well and concentrated far less than he did last year on gestures to charm the galleries. I remember only one. In his fourth-round match, with Jim Grabb, in the Grandstand Court, he made an errant return of serve that hit the net judge on the side of his neck and knocked his glasses off. Agassi seized the opportunity to fetch a fresh Agassi T-shirt from his clothesbag and present it gallantly to the net judge. In the quarter-finals, against Jimmy Connors, he had his first tough match. Last year, when the two met in the quarters under the lights in the Stadium Court, Agassi had seemed much too fast for Connors. This year, Connors, who turned thirty-seven during the championship, had been moving like a schoolboy and hitting the ball with such authority that in the fourth round he destroyed Edberg, 6–2, 6–3, 6–1. The Connors-Agassi quarter-final was played on a court flooded with sunshine, and was quite different in nearly every respect from the meeting last year, which Agassi won, 6–2, 7–6, 6–1. Connors' brash manner makes him a favorite with the New York galleries, and they were solidly behind him even after he dropped the opening set, 6–1. In the second set, Connors twice broke Agassi's serve, and the packed house roared its appreciation as he went on to take the set, 6–4. Early in the third set, Connors broke Agassi's serve twice more, and when he proceeded to take that set, 6–0, the match seemed as good as over. The first indication of a change in momentum came in the third game of the fourth set, when Agassi saved two break points on his serve and held on to lead, 2–1. Then, hitting out with a new severity, he won the next two games at love and went in front, 4–1. He closed out the set, 6–3, with his ninth ace of the match. In the decisive fifth set, Agassi moved rapidly to 5–1. Connors proceeded to break Agassi's serve and then held his own at love to move to 4–5. Serving the critical tenth game, Agassi got to 40–15, match point. He went for a backhand down the line, but it curved into the alley. On the next point, following a brief exchange, he tried a daring sliced drop shot from behind the baseline. The ball barely cleared the net. Connors, lunging toward the ball, got his racquet on it but shovelled it over the baseline. Game, set, and match, Agassi, 6–1, 4–6, 0–6, 6–3, 6–4. It should be noted that this was the first time Agassi had ever won a five-set match in professional competition. This experience, combined with the stouthearted way he came from behind, suggests that the effect of this victory on him could be substantial.

The third quarter-final, in which Berger met Krickstein, another young man in his early twenties, was halted near the start of the fourth set. Berger, who was seeded eleventh, and Krickstein, who was seeded fourteenth, were engaged in a wearing baseline struggle that featured unusually long points. They split the first two sets, and in the sixth game of the third set, when Berger was down 15–30 and 2–3 in games, he started cramping. Krickstein won that set, 6–2. Berger, limping slightly, consulted the tournament trainer after losing the opening game of the fourth set. He then defaulted.

The fourth and last quarter-final, Becker versus Yannick Noah, was played on Wednesday night in the Stadium Court. On Tuesday afternoon, Becker had eliminated Mikael Pernfors, of Sweden, in a match that was much more gruelling than its score—5–7, 6–3, 6–2, 6–1—suggests. A former University of Georgia star, Pernfors had chased down and returned apparent winners all over the place. The Becker-Noah match featured two of the strongest players in the game. Noah, an exceptional athlete, who stands six feet four and weighs about a hundred and ninety pounds, is a prodigious server and an acrobatic menace in the forecourt. His big year was 1983, when he won the French Open. He came into his match with Becker in a very hopeful frame of mind. Just before the championships, he had engaged Dennis Ralston as his

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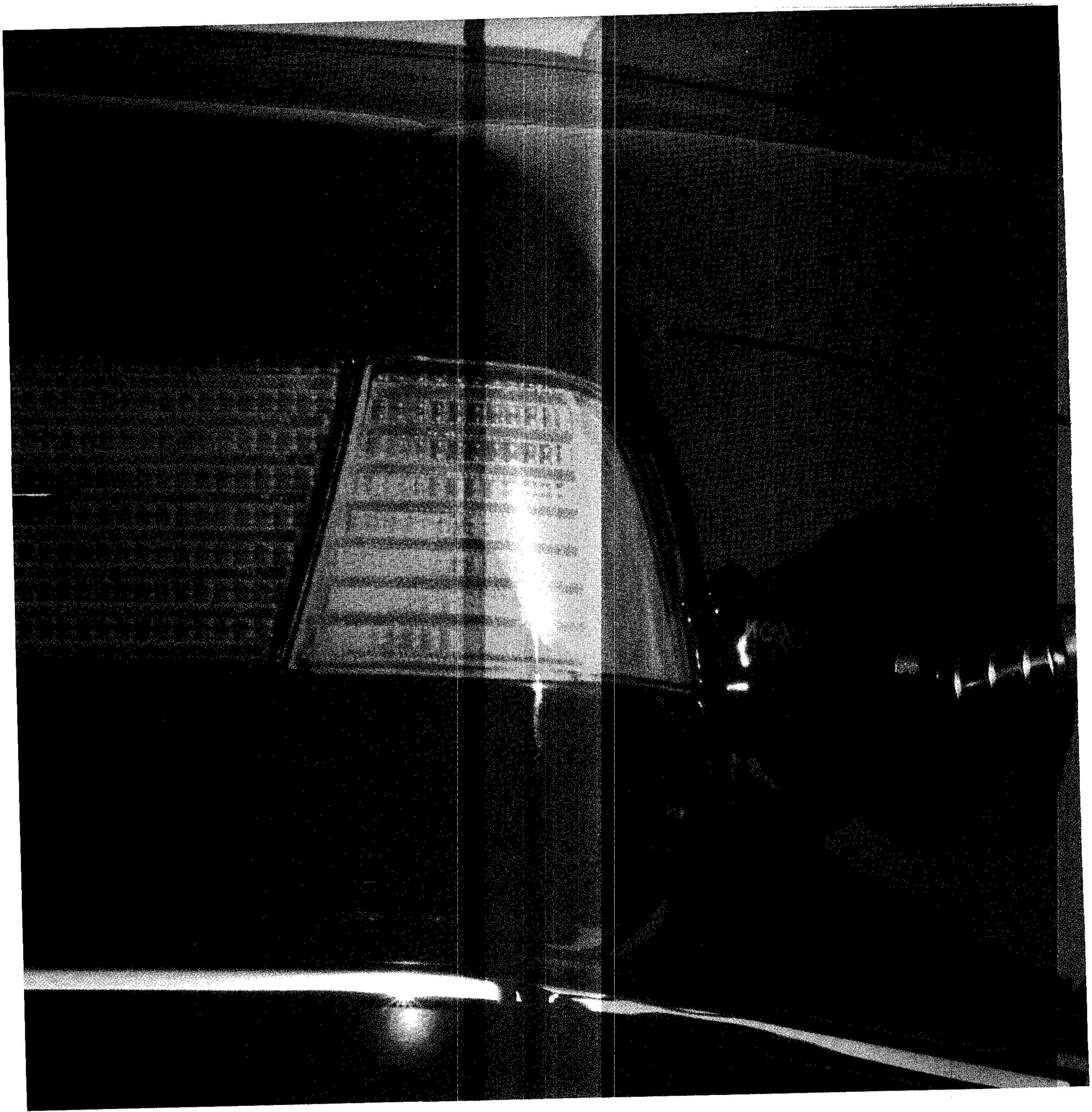

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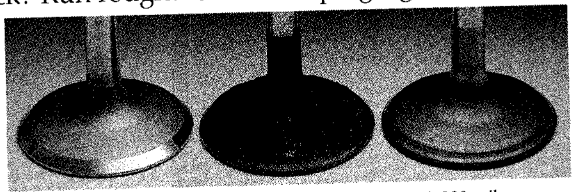

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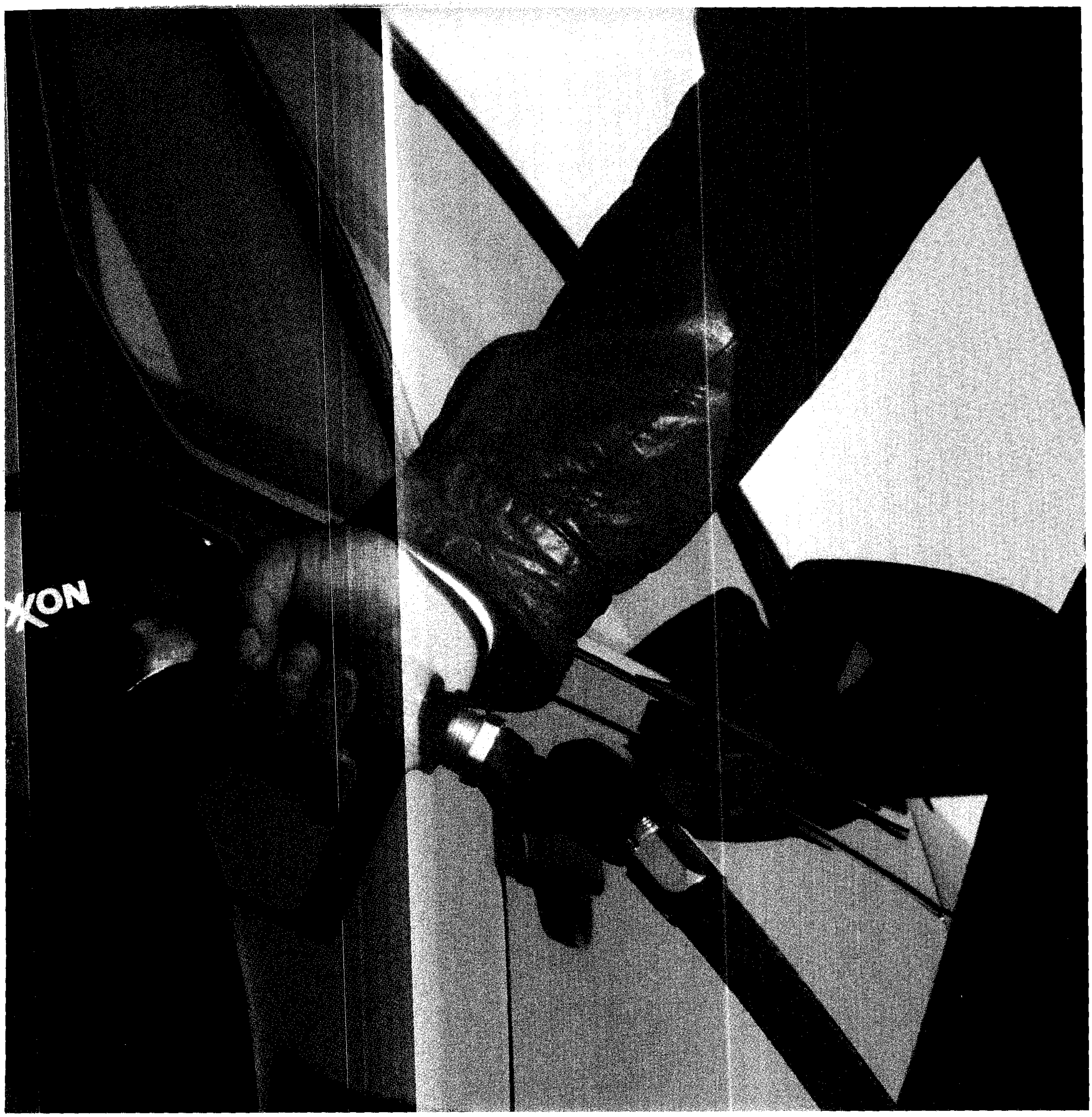

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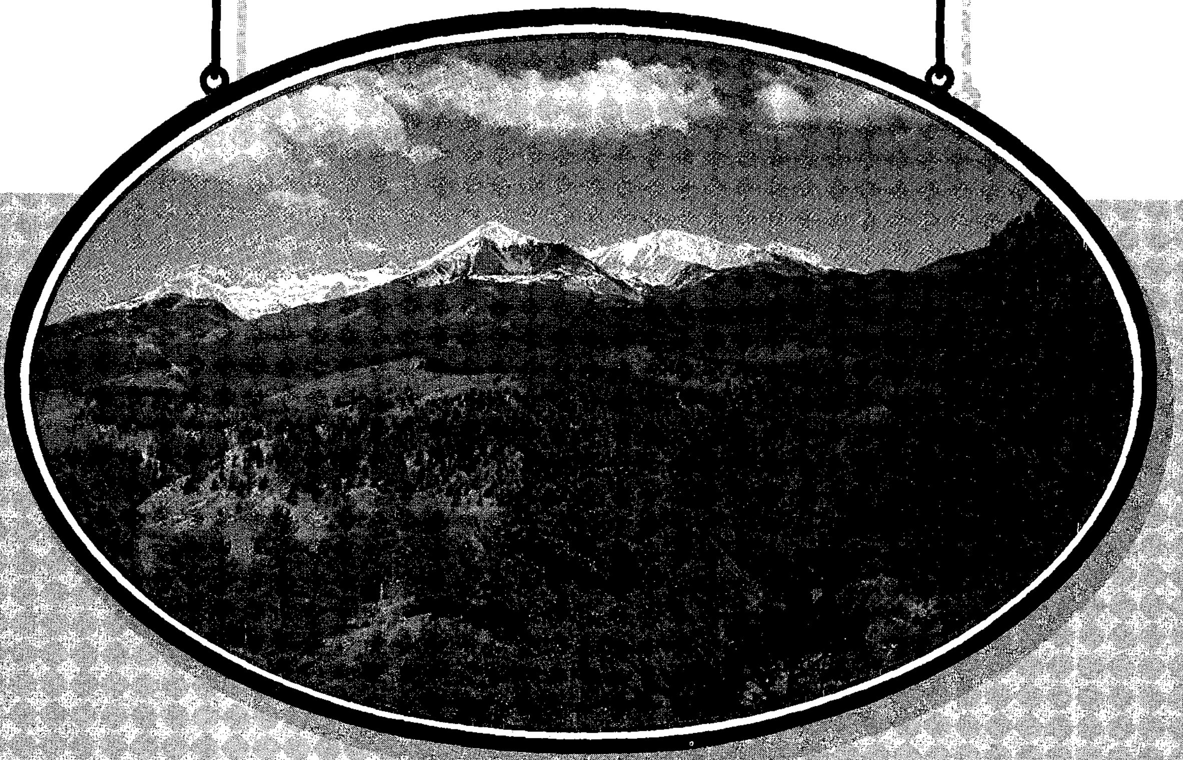

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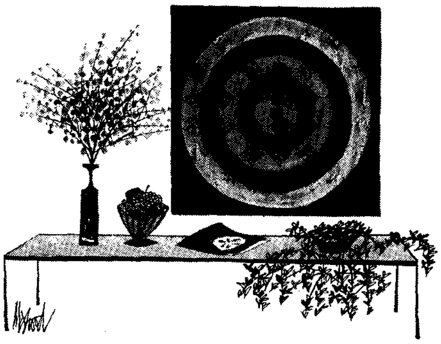
coach, and he was buoyed up by how well he was playing. In the fourth round, for instance, he had outlasted Alberto Mancini, of Argentina, in five sets, and Mancini is a very tough customer, who this spring won the Grand Prix tournaments in Rome and in Monte Carlo. Finally, Noah had a good record against Becker. He had defeated him in Rome in 1985 and in Milan in 1988, and had lost to him only once, in Indianapolis in 1987. In overcoming Noah, 6–3, 6–3, 6–2, in the quarter-finals, Becker played absolutely prodigious tennis. His serving was explosive. He served only three aces, but he had so much stuff on the ball and placed it so expertly that Noah was able to win a total of only eleven points in the thirteen games Becker served. Becker won five of his service games at love. On his second serve, which isn't as fast as his first but bounces higher, he won twenty-two of twenty-eight points. In addition, Becker returned service well, made some unbelievable low volleys, and was almost totally in command at net. For the first time in our Open, I think, we saw the Becker who plays the serve-and-volley game so well at Wimbledon.

Becker has grown a bit this year and now stands six feet four. He weighs about a hundred and eighty-five pounds. It is hard to believe what a big fellow he is when he is standing by himself, for he doesn't have the broad shoulders and narrow hips that we have come to associate with star athletes. He is built like a big ten-year-old boy with especially heavy thighs and shins. And you don't sense how strong, well coördinated, and fast Becker is for a man his size until you observe him in a match—especially one with a conspicuously fine athlete like Noah.

DURING the second week of a major tennis championship, it is not unusual for the tournament director to be harried by the problem of finding some way to get all the postponed matches made up, so that the tournament will be back on schedule by the last three days of the second week. Because of the practically uninterrupted stretch of sunny weather, the 1989 U.S. Open was faced with the rare dilemma of finding enough good matches to provide the patrons with an enticing program on the Friday of the second week. The tournament director solved it brilliantly: the men's doubles final—McEnroe and Woodforde versus Flach and Seguso, the veteran American pair—would be held between the two women's singles semifinals. Garrison, the fifth seed, and Navratilova, the second seed, would meet in their semifinals before the doubles, and Graf, the first seed, would meet the third seed, Sabatini, after them.

It took Navratilova, who has won our women's singles championship four times, a little while to get her game organized, but after pulling out the first set in a tiebreaker, she rolled through the second set, 6–2. The Graf-Sabatini match was a much more complex affair. While Graf and Sabatini play doubles together in the major tournaments, they are not great pals. Sabatini is not convinced that she cannot beat Graf in singles, and Graf is quite sure that in any big championship she can handle Sabatini. In 1988, when they met in the final of the U.S. Open with Graf's bid for a Grand Slam riding on the outcome, Graf took the first set handily. Sabatini, a big, strong young woman, then won the second set, 6–3, keeping Graf anchored at the center of the baseline by clouting a long succession of high-arching forehands and backhands hit with such heavy topspin that the ball bounced extraordinarily high and had to be returned with a defensive stroke. In the third set, Graf was able to regain control of the pattern of play, and she frequently put the ball away before Sabatini could resort to the tactics she had used earlier. Sabatini started her semifinal with Graf in a confident mood and sailed through the first set, 6–3. She made many fewer errors than Graf, who was having trouble with her usually dependable forehand. Graf then picked up the tempo of her play and took the second set, 6–4, breaking Sabatini's serve in the third game and making that break stand up. In the third set, although Graf appeared to be in control of the match, there was a minimum of the exuberance one usually finds in her play as she took the first four games and went on to win the set, 6–2. For many of us, the first hint that something might be wrong with her had come at 5–2, when the players changed courts. During that interval, Graf had stayed on her feet instead of sitting down and said nothing to anyone. When play was resumed, she won her service and the match with a marvellous backhand drop-volley that just cleared the net. She threw her arms in the air in relief, hurriedly shook hands with Sabatini, and went directly to the trainer's room. The internist who took care of Graf explained later that during the last few games of the third set she had suffered cramps in both thighs. He also remarked that halfway through the match the temperature on the court had risen to almost a hundred and twenty degrees. However, he said, he thought that Graf would be in good physical shape for her final with Navratilova the next afternoon.



Early on the morning of the first Thursday of the Open fortnight, a day after being eliminated in the second round of the men's singles by Haarhuis, McEnroe, who is now thirty, phoned his doubles partner, Woodforde, and suggested that they meet at Flushing Meadow around ten o'clock that morning and get in some practice before their next doubles match. In the second round of the singles in the championships last year, Woodforde, a tall redhead from Adelaide, had defeated McEnroe in five sets. An attachment grew up between them, possibly because they are both left-handed, possibly because Woodforde had been a great fan of McEnroe's during his heyday in the early nineteen-eighties. In any event, during last year's Open, Woodforde had asked McEnroe if he would consider playing doubles with him in two tournaments on the West Coast shortly after the Open—the Volvo Tennis/Los Angeles, and the Volvo Tennis Open, in San Francisco. They had enjoyed playing in those two events, and this year they played doubles in a few more tournaments with some success. Seeded seventh in this year's U.S. Open, they won their first match, 6–7, 6–1, 6–4. They won their second, 6–3, 6–3. In the quarter-finals, they met the first-seeded team,

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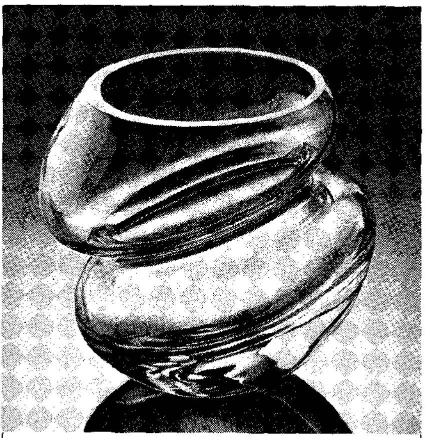
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Rick Leach and Jim Pugh, of California, who had won the doubles in the Australian Open early this year. In this match, McEnroe and Woodforde, as is their practice, conferred frequently between points on tactical adjustments. In a best-of-five-sets match, McEnroe and Woodforde outlasted Leach and Pugh, 4–6, 7–6, 6–4, 7–6, in a stunning upset. They next met the team of Paul Annacone and Christo van Rensberg, and took care of them, 6–4, 7–6, 6–2. In the final, they came up against Flach and Seguso, who had won the U.S. doubles in 1985 and the Wimbledon doubles in 1987 and 1988. They had also played doubles for the United States team in Davis Cup matches over the past five years.

McEnroe and Woodforde took the opening set of the doubles final, 6–4, but dropped the second, 4–6, when, in the tenth game, with the score 30–all and Woodforde serving, Seguso swatted a crosscourt forehand that couldn't be handled, and Flach hit a low return of serve which Woodforde netted. Throughout these sets, McEnroe and Woodforde again frequently talked things over between points. They were obviously pleased that they had come this far, and they gave the spectators the feeling that they thought they could win the match if they played the big points intelligently. The key game in the third set was the seventh, in which McEnroe and Woodforde broke Seguso's serve at fifteen to go out in front, 4–3. According to the scribbles in my notebook, the points came on an error by Seguso, an acutely angled left-to-right volley by McEnroe, an unanticipatable placement by McEnroe down the left alley, and a netted forehand drive by Flach. These brief details of how the seventh game was won are misleading if they give the impression that McEnroe carried the load for the American-Australian pair. Not at all. Their success depended on how well and imaginatively they combined as a team. For example, throughout the final, which they won, 6–4, 4–6, 6–3, 6–3, Woodforde returned service exceptionally well—appreciably better than any of the three other players. And, yes, throughout the match, McEnroe, who veils his intentions so successfully, won many pivotal points by pulling off the unexpected shot.

The real story behind the McEnroe-Woodforde victory, of course, is the wonderful job that McEnroe has done

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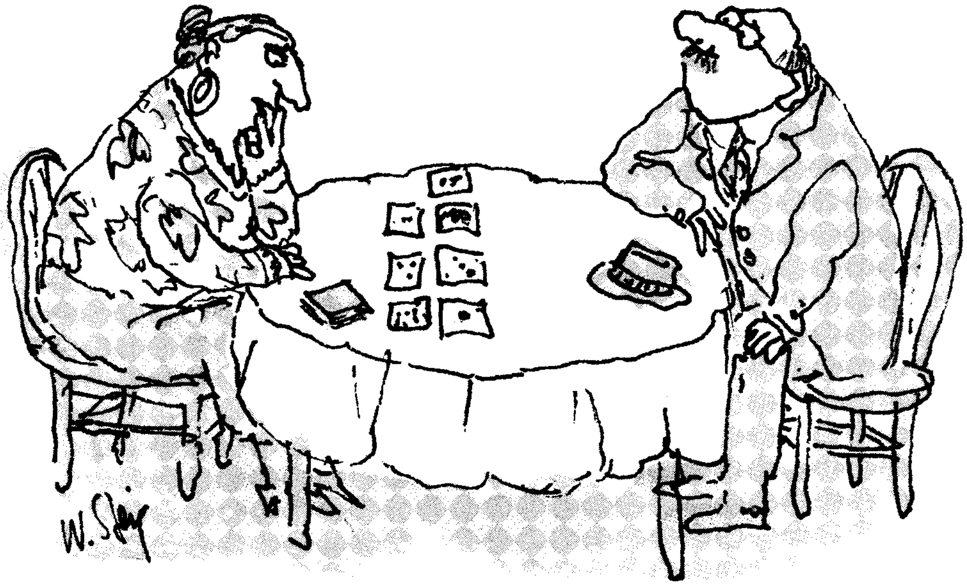
during this past year in getting his personal problems under control. Many people believe that the remarkable change in his conduct has been brought about primarily by his awareness of his responsibilities as the father of two very young sons. He seems to realize how important it is for him to be a person they can be proud of. People who know tennis well think that McEnroe's game has come back this year to the point where on his best days it is only about fifteen per cent below the standard he reached at the peak of his career, in 1984, when, among his other achievements, he defeated Connors in the Wimbledon final, 6–1, 6–1, 6–2.

THE standard format for the second Saturday of our Open calls for one of the men's semifinals to be played before the women's final and for the other men's semifinal to be played after it. The men aren't crazy about this arrangement, because the winner has to regather his energy for the final the next day. The women's finalists have a similar kick. Both Graf and Navratilova had played their semifinals the day before and would have preferred a day's rest. In the first men's semi, Becker defeated Krickstein in straight sets, 6–4, 6–3, 6–4. The match took nearly three hours. Krickstein played good, solid tennis, and Becker, looking ahead to the final, rarely left the backcourt and at no time extended himself.

Navratilova has seldom played better tennis than she did for a set and a half in her final with Graf, who, at twenty, is a dozen years her junior. Controlling the pattern of play astutely, she outmaneuvered Graf in most of their rallies and frequently hurried her into errors with deep volleys and incisive penetrations with her sliced backhand. In winning the first set, 6–3, Navratilova pulled out the last three points to win the seventh game, broke Graf at love in the eighth, and then held her own service at love—a run of eleven straight points. If Graf didn't look as fast around the court as she usually does, it was because Navratilova was playing her perfectly. Graf kept on fighting, but it wasn't until the eighth game of the second set that she got back into the match, when, at 4–3, aided by two double faults, she broke Navratilova's serve by forcing two backhand errors. Set to Graf, 7–5. In the deciding set, with Graf leading, 2–1, both players put on fresh clothes during the brief interval in which they changed courts. When play was resumed, Graf, covering the court with intense resolution, won the next four games, the set, 6-1, and the match. At no time did she produce strokes of the quality that poured from her racquet in the 1988 Wimbledon final against Navratilova, when she played perhaps the best tennis of her career. This year's final was a match that Graf won on determination and grit, and it was a considerable achievement.

The second men's semifinal, Lendl versus Agassi, had definite echoes of their encounter in the semifinals of the 1988 Open, which Lendl won, 4–6, 6–2, 6–3, 6–4. In their first set in this year's semis, Agassi, hitting the ball assertively and moving well, had four cracks at breaking Lendl's big serve in the fourth game, finally did so, and moved out in front, 3–1. The turning point of the set, and perhaps of the match, was the ninth game. Leading 5–3 and serving for the set, Agassi was broken at thirty. Eventually, the set was decided by a tiebreaker, which Lendl took, seven points to four. Everything considered—even the courage Agassi had shown in his comeback against Connors—it looked as if Agassi simply didn't have the stuff to stay with a harsh server and hard-hitting baseline player as resolute as Lendl. He proceeded to lose the second set, 6–1. He did come back and win the third set, but he was never in the fourth. Lendl, 7–6, 6–1, 3–6, 6–1. Agassi took his defeat stoically. "This year, I think, I was a little more stable," he said. "I think I made Lendl play more consistently."



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THE Lendl-Becker final began at 4:27 P.M. on Sunday afternoon, at the conclusion of the telecast of the opening game of the National Football League's 1989 season, between the Dallas Cowboys and the New Orleans Saints. Earlier in the afternoon, Navratilova and her fellow-Czech Hana Mandlikova had defeated the newly formed team of Mary Joe Fernández and Pam Shriver in the final of the women's doubles, 5–7, 6–4, 6–4. It was another sticky day at Flushing Meadow, but the spectators jamming the Stadium Court were leaning forward in their eagerness to see the clash between Lendl and Becker, the two best players in the world. By reaching the final of our championship in eight consecutive years, Lendl, who is now twenty-nine, would be tying the record set by Tilden between 1918 and 1925. Lendl resembles Tilden in being a powerful server and an adamant baseliner who tries to beat his opponents by moving them around the court. There the resemblance ceases. Whereas Tilden, an actor at heart, loved playing to the galleries, Lendl, who has a touch of dourness in him, is all business when

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there is a major title at stake. Becker's style of play is decidedly different from Lendl's. He likes to serve and volley. This is a type of game best suited to the grass courts of Wimbledon. In our Open, he had never struck his best form, although he did reach the semifinals in 1986. The people who favored him to win this final pointed out that he had all the right credentials. At the start of the tournament, he had barely escaped elimination in the second round, when his opponent, Rostagno, held two match points. Moreover, his success on the big occasion has always depended on how well he is serving, and he had come onto his big first and second serves at just the right time, in the quarter-finals against Noah. He would be hard to beat.

In the opening set, Becker went out in front two games to love. Serving the opening game, which went to deuce four times, he had double-faulted twice but had saved himself with no fewer than four service winners and two aces. Lendl, on the other hand, had served a shaky game and lost it with the second of two double faults. In the fifth game, Lendl broke back, winning the game with a deep forehand drive off Becker's second serve. Serve then followed the server, and, at 6–6 in games, this called for a twelve-point tiebreaker, in which the winner is the player who first wins seven points and has a margin of two points over his opponent. (If the issue hasn't been decided after twelve points, the tiebreaker continues until one of the players gains a two-point margin.) Becker served the first point, and won it when Lendl missed an easy backhand shot. Becker in front, one to nothing. Lendl to serve two points. Becker won the first when Lendl netted another backhand, and he won the second when he put a forehand volley away. Becker, leading 3–0, to serve twice. He picked up his fourth straight point when Lendl's backhand return of service carried out of court. He went to 5–0 when he got in a big first serve that Lendl couldn't handle. Lendl, serving the sixth point, finally picked up his first point when Becker was long with a forehand. The two men then changed courts, with Lendl, trailing 1–5, to serve the seventh point. He won it after a good rally with a backhand placement down the line. Becker to serve the next two points. After a brief rally, he surprised Lendl by passing him with a crosscourt back-

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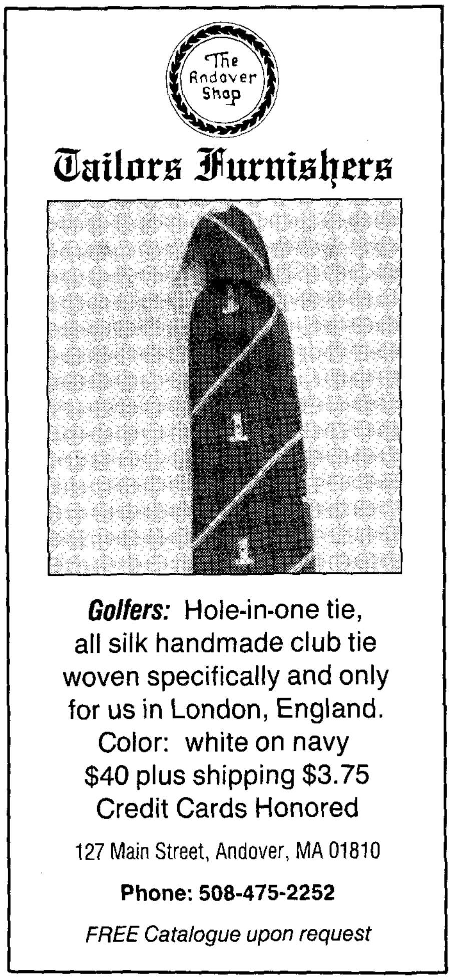
hand. Leading 6–2 now, Becker followed his serve into the forecourt and put away a backhand volley to win the tiebreaker, 7–2, and, with it, the first set, 7–6.

Lendl got his serve working much better in the second set. He has a relatively simplified serving style. A lean, well-built man who stands six feet two, he pumps his racquet back two or three times as he prepares to serve. Then, as he twists his shoulders fully, he tosses the ball quite high directly over his head and unleashes a hard serve hit with the particular kind of spin he wants on it. Sometimes he hits the ball flat, sometimes with a kick spin, sometimes with a slice spin. His first serve lands deep in the service box about sixty per cent of the time. He hits his second serve almost as hard as his first. He had his serve well under control in the second set and didn't lose it in four service games. He broke Becker's serve twice, to win the set, 6–1. Becker's serving action and the prelude to it are much more ornate than Lendl's. As he walks to his position on the baseline, he likes to bounce the ball knee-high with his racquet anywhere from eight to fourteen times. Then, after taking up his service position, he swings his racquet a couple of feet back two or three times before moving into his serve. It is a complicated series of movements. He bends his knees very deeply, as Gottfried von Cramm, the great German player of the nineteen-thirties used to, and leans far back with the upper part of his torso, his neck, and his head as he tosses the ball about four feet over his head. He hits the ball with terrific power as he uncoils and swings over and through it. It was Lendl, however, who served the great second set.

The gallery of slightly over twenty thousand people was respectfully hushed as the third set got under way. Becker served his seventh ace of the match in taking the opening game of the set. He broke Lendl's serve at thirty in the second game, winning it when Lendl missed a backhand volley. Serve followed the server the next four games. Lendl then broke Becker's serve, but, serving at 3–4 to square the set, he was broken at love. Becker closed out the set, 6–3, to lead two sets to one.

At this point, the over-all situation became clearer to me. In a typical Lendl match, his continuous hard hitting tends to wear his opponents down. That hadn't been the case in the final. For the first time in this country on a big occasion, we were seeing Becker at his best. We had had a glimpse of this in his match with Noah. Now we saw again that when Becker is in top form he takes charge of many points with his fine anticipation, speed around the court, assertive ground strokes, and swift volleys. He is not just a fearsome server. He is a beautifully coördinated athlete, a sort of tennis equivalent of the young Jack Nicklaus.

It was just about seven o'clock when the fourth set got started, and the lights of the Stadium Court were turned on in the gloaming. Lendl to serve the first game. As he habitually does, he dried off his right hand by sticking it in the right pocket of his shorts, where he keeps a supply of sawdust. With the help of his fifth ace in the match, he won the first game of what proved to be a memorable set. He then broke Becker's serve at fifteen. Becker replied by sweeping the next four games. He broke Lendl back by hustling to a drop shot and angling it away. Pouring everything into his serve now, he won the fourth game with no trouble. He broke Lendl at fifteen in the fifth game, putting away a blistering smash to win the second point. He held his serve at thirty to go to 4–2 in the sixth game. Lendl picked up the pace of his serve and won the seventh game. He then got back to 4–4 by breaking Becker's serve, pulling out the game with a backhand placement on his return of serve and another backhand placement down the line. Lendl went in front again, 5–4, with a forceful service game. Becker answered by serving a love game. He was charged up now, moving from side to side in his baseline stance as he prepared to receive Lendl's service. Lendl, after saving a break point, won this game by forcing two backhand errors, and moved to 6–5. Becker stormed back to knot the set at 6–6, finishing the game with a flourish, his tenth ace of the match. That set up a second tiebreaker. Lendl won the first two points, but Becker jumped out in front, and led four points to two when the two men changed courts. Lendl won two of the next three points. However, Becker, now leading 5–4, would be serving the next two points, and the match would be riding on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them. Serving into the backhand court, he hit a fierce first serve to Lendl's backhand, which Lendl couldn't touch. At match point, Becker unloaded another booming first serve to Lendl's backhand. Lendl got his racquet on it, but the best he could do was to trickle the ball into the bottom of the net. Tiebreaker to Becker, seven points to four. Set and match to Becker, 7–6, 1–6, 6–3, 7–6.

IN the Interview Room after the match, Lendl, who has a good deal of respect for Becker, talked about the final in a detached, reflective manner. "Tiebreakers are usually a shoot-out, but with a serve like his he got up 5–4 in the tiebreaker and then he hit two great serves," he said. He replied to a question, "There were a few close line calls that could have gone either way, but there always are." Lendl became much more animated when he was asked if he thought that during the next five years he and Becker would be battling to see who was No. 1 in tennis. "I will be thirty in March," he said, with a sudden vibrancy. He couldn't predict what would be happening in the future, except that his main objective in 1990 would be to try to win Wimbledon, the only one of the Grand Slam events he hasn't captured. He intimated that he might skip the French Open next year so that he could prepare himself better for Wimbledon.

Becker was as impressive in his press conference as he had been in the final. "The court became much quicker the second week," he said. "The ball was sliding more. This was good for my forehand and for my serve, which are important parts of my game. I'm coming quite close right now to the best I can play." When he was asked if this victory would change him, he replied, "I hope not. It has been very good the last five months." He went on to say, "It was quite tough on me after I won Wimbledon at seventeen. There was suddenly so much pressure. So many people were expecting me to go out and just overtake everyone. It was quite impossible, and I grew a lot in those years. A normal twenty-one-year-old doesn't have to do the things I do in some ways, and in other ways he has to do more. To call me twenty-one, it's wrong. In some respects I'm fifteen, and in some I'm thirty-five."

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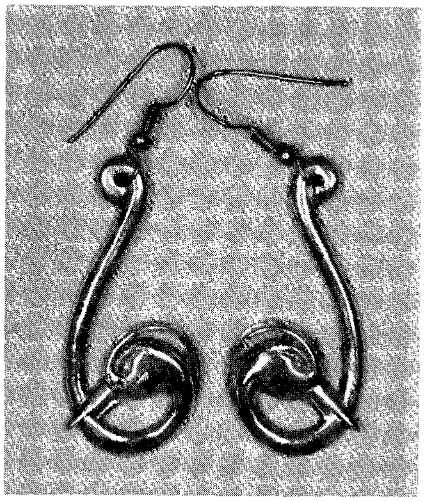
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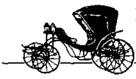
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Whoopee

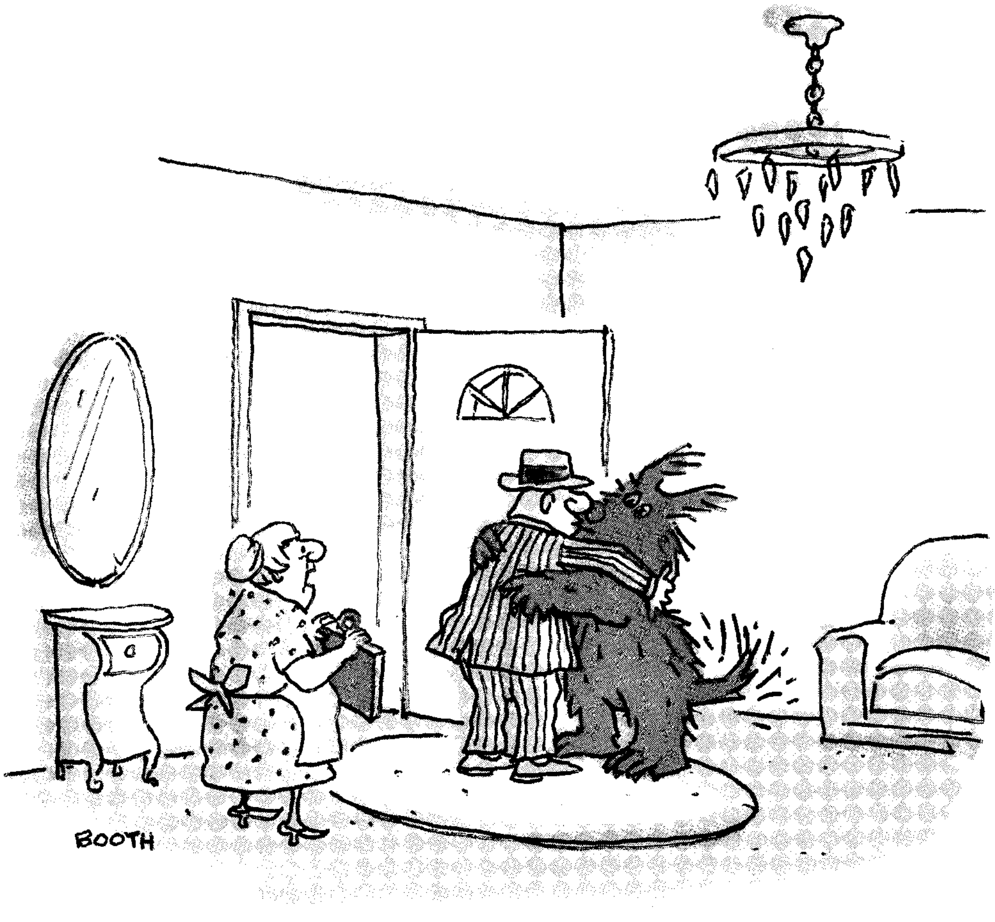
IN "The Fabulous Baker Boys" the twenty-nine-year-old writer-director Steve Kloves glides you through a romantic fantasy that has a forties-movie sultriness and an eighties movie-struck melancholy. Put them together and you have a movie in which eighties glamour is being defined. Kloves gets you to reminisce in a special way: you have your stored-up forties fantasies, and now you see morose people in bars and night clubs that look left over from those days, and everybody's shrug about things being run-down is part of the glamour. If this film has a specific progenitor, it might be "Shoot the Piano Player," Truffaut's comedy about melancholia, in which the piano-player hero wants not to care anymore—to be out of it. (The heroine says, "Even when he's with somebody, he walks alone.") Kloves has a new New Wave vision. He trips you off, inviting you to laugh if you want to. You feel the heat even if you're laughing.

Kloves has written quick, slang dialogue; most of what's being said is unspoken. Beau and Jeff Bridges are Frank and Jack, the Baker brothers of Seattle—a team of pianists who have been working together for thirty-one years, the last fifteen in cocktail lounges. (Jack was a child prodigy when they got their start.) For round-faced Frank, the older brother (Beau), playing the piano is a livelihood—nothing more. A settled suburban family man in his early forties, he handles the business side, picks the music, does the patter onstage, and worries about his bald spot and Jack's longish hair and lack of grooming. (As Beau plays him, Frank is the human center of the movie.) Jack, who's in his late thirties and lives in a crummy tenderloin apartment, is so fed up with everything that he can barely stay awake during the performances. He seems depressed, surly, as if he might wander off at any moment, but he sits there and goes through the motions.

Their arrangements—pop classics, standards, and show tunes—sound dead, and they've been getting fewer dates, and those in tackier rooms, when Frank proposes that they take on a girl vocalist. They audition thirty-seven songbirds who can't carry a tune before Michelle Pfeiffer turns up, as Susie Diamond, a tough, honest floozy. Asked what kind of experience she's had, Susie answers that for the last couple of years she's been "on call for the Triple-A Escort Service." But when she sings (Pfeiffer does her own singing) she's a sexy dream—tender, nostalgic, just what's wanted of a lounge performer. Her interpretations of the standards are simple and natural in a way that cuts through the thick overlay of pop banality. Once she's part of the act and she and the Baker boys are on their way up, she says she doesn't want to sing "Feelings" or "Bali Ha'i" again, but Frank insists, and when we hear her on "Feelings" she cleans away the psychodrama, and it actually sounds relatively fresh.

Susie loves to perform, and she has a low-down impudence—she gives the picture its kick. She's a funny girl, not as innocent or farcical as the lovelorn pixie that Pfeiffer played in "Married to the Mob" but with something of that free personality. Susie has a fast, profane way of saying what she thinks, and it's disruptive. Without especially meaning to, she challenges the brothers' relationship. She challenges it more directly after she discovers that Jack plays jazz piano when he's playing for himself. (The picture calls what he plays jazz, but it's not different enough from his bland teamwork—just a little harsher and a lot showier. His jazz is dubbed by Dave Grusin; the runs sound like colored lights on waterfalls.) Seeing Jack in his secret jazz world, Susie knows that this is a different man from the almost pathologically laid-back pianist she's been working with—that he loves music the way she does—and she's drawn to him.

Frank senses what's going on and becomes more of a fussbudget, nitpicking about Jack's hair and his smoking. The three of them are beginning to make real money, but Frank keeps crabbing—nobody's neat enough for him. When they're at an expensively tasteful resort hotel, booked for the Christmas holidays, Frank is indignant



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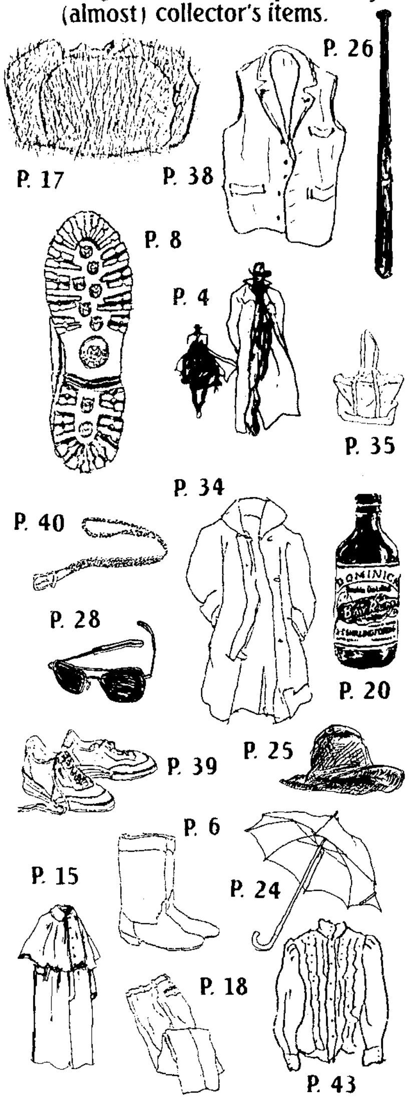

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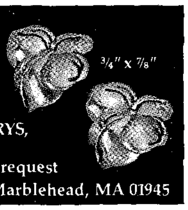

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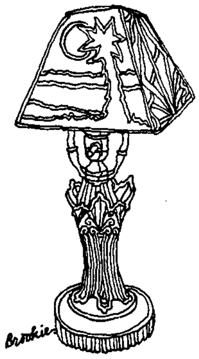
because Susie is keeping him up by listening to Ellington at two in the morning.

While the pressures build, you're free-associating with old movies and smiling in recognition. Pfeiffer's good-bad Susie recalls the grinning infectiousness of Carole Lombard, the radiance of the very young Lauren Bacall, and Pfeiffer herself in other movies (and in her eager, fluid performance in John O'Hara's "Natica Jackson" on PBS). Mostly, it's the emotional states of romantic melodramas that are recalled—the moments when the hero, hollowing his cheeks, looks like a god but, for reasons he can't explain, leaves the heroine out on a limb. Jeff Bridges has never been as glamorously beyond reach as he is here. As Jack, he can show affection only to a dejected child and an old, sick dog. In the first scene, Jack has risen from the bed of a woman who asks if she'll see him again, and she's told "No." As he's closing the door behind him, she says, "You've got great hands." Jack is tall, quiet, sensual—a love object who spreads his long fingers and caresses the keys of a piano. Even when he plays alone at a jazz joint his face seems sad, blurred, as if he were remembering what music used to mean to him. (That's the eighties side of the movie: this Sleeping Beauty may never fully wake up.)



Everyone has bluesy, narcissistic feelings, and that's what Steve Kloves is into. The movie is all fake blues, but the fakeness isn't offensive, because it's recognized for what it is, and respected for the longings it calls up. Dennis Potter got it right when, in an interview, the critic Michael Sragow asked him, "Why do popular songs have so much power in your work?" He answered:

> Because I don't make the mistake that high-culture mongers do of assuming that because people like cheap art, their feelings are cheap, too. When people say, "Oh listen, they're playing our song," they don't mean "Our song, this little cheap, tinkling, syncopated piece of rubbish, is what we felt when we met." What they're saying is, "That song reminds us of that tremendous feeling we had when we met."

Essentially, at "The Fabulous Baker Boys" we're laughing together at the magnetism of popular music and the magnetism of commercial-movie emotions; they overlap so much they're practically the same thing. (The story line blends them.)

And we're laughing at the dazzling happiness that radiates from Michelle Pfeiffer as she sings eight songs, including "More Than You Know" and two by Rodgers and Hart—"Ten Cents a Dance" and "My Funny Valentine." We laugh the hardest when she writhes and thrashes about on top of Jack's grand piano in the ballroom of the resort hotel on New Year's Eve. Frank has been called away, and Susie finally has her shot at seducing Jack. She goes all out, while singing "Makin' Whoopee." Kloves and Dave Grusin blow the opportunity to make the song more of a communication between the piano and the vocalist, but with Pfeiffer in deep-red velvet crawling on the piano like a long-legged kitty-cat and sliding down to be closer to the pianist, something new has been achieved in torrid comedy. Pfeiffer's dress is red the way Rita Hayworth's dress in "Gilda" was black—as a statement. Hayworth hit a peak of comic voluptuousness in that gown, doing striptease movements to "Put the Blame on Mame," with Anita Ellis's voice coming out of her. Pfeiffer in red doesn't displace Hayworth; making love to Jack through her song, she matches her.

Kloves previously had a script produced that he wrote when he was twenty-two—"Racing with the Moon." That movie was actually set in the forties, and it, too, had a moody, low-keyed texture and the kind of dialogue that allows the actors to find their way. But it was too much like a sensitive first novel. It didn't have Michelle Pfeiffer or anything like the swooniness that this demi-musical has. Kloves hasn't devised subplots that will pay off late in the story; he works with melodramatic atmosphere but not with melodrama, and he doesn't give the movie the boost that might be expected toward the end. It may seem to drift for a bit. Yet it has a look; the cinematographer, Michael Ballhaus, has given it a funky languor. By ordinary-movie standards, the pacing here could be snappier at times—more decisive—but it's of a piece with the bluesiness. The relaxed, nowhere-to-go atmosphere holds the film in a memory vise. The choice of songs, their placement, and the sound mix itself are extraordinary—so subtle they make fun of any fears of kitschy emotions. And there's a thrill in watching the three actors, because they seem perfect at what they're doing—newly minted icons.

The Bridges brothers don't have to act brotherhood; it takes care of itself. At one point, Frank is doing his usual inane, ingratiating patter about himself and his brother, to yank applause from the audience. Suddenly, the near-catatonic Jack says, "I love you, Frank," in a low, muffled voice. Is he just being hostile? Or are these true feelings that he had to express to cauterize the show-biz lies? Frank is so rattled that he needs to recover himself before going on with his routine. Kloves lets the two underplay their scenes together. They don't reach out to us; we reach out to them.

JOHN SAYLES' script for the Bill Forsyth film "Breaking In" (the closing-night presentation of the New York Film Festival) is confident, offbeat, and shallow, all at the same time. Burt Reynolds, Casey Siemaszko, and the other actors go looking for stuff to play that Sayles just hasn't put there. It's my impression that almost all the Sayles scripts have this deficiency. They're thoughtfully constructed, with neatly placed shards of irony, but I almost always come out of a Sayles movie feeling: Is that all? He's the thinking man's shallow writer-director; he doesn't give us drama, he gives us notions. When he directs his scripts himself, the faults can be attributed to his clumsiness with the camera, but the Scots wonder Bill Forsyth does a beautiful, clean job on "Breaking In"; I think he's brought out everything that there is to be brought out, and it still isn't enough. The movie is moderately entertaining, yet it never gets rolling. It has no belly.

And the characters have no interior life. As the sixty-one-year-old Ernie, the old-pro safecracker from New York who's operating now in Portland, Oregon, Burt Reynolds shows his polish in a somewhat impersonal role. (The film has youth's idea of maturity—i.e., that people become sane and dispassionate.) Siemaszko is Mike, the nosy, amiable kid that Ernie takes on as his lookout and apprentice. The levelheaded Ernie is content to live in a tract home on the fringe of the city and not call attention to himself, but the kid can't resist flashing his new wealth. Forsyth has always been partial to fluky adolescents, and Siemaszko (he was Jonathan, the cartoonist hero of Spielberg's hour-long "Amazing Stories" film "The Mission") gives Mike a wide-eyed furtiveness; he resembles Michael J. Pollard in "Bonnie and Clyde." Mike keeps bopping around and catching your eye. He's Ernie's opposite; he's so unstable you don't know what he's up to, and he doesn't know, either.

Everything is worked out in symmetrical pairs. Ernie maintains a steady, paying relationship with a prostitute, Delphine (Lorraine Toussaint), who fixes Mike up with *her* apprentice, Carrie (Sheila Kelley), but Mike is smitten with Carrie and insists that she quit dating other guys and let him take care of her. She's offended. The irony is less than supple; it's like G. B. Shaw on a bad day. Siemaszko and Kelley are both very active performers, though; they move right into their characters, and that helps the movie. (As the fools, they seem to have more free will than the other characters.) The film also features a pair of retired crooks (Albert Salmi and Harry Carey), who are Ernie's card-playing pals, and a pair of adversarial lawyers (Maury Chaykin and Steve Tobolowsky), who have a satisfyingly cynical—if unconvincing—negotiating session. (Chaykin, a true eccentric actor, creates suspense by keeping you in doubt about whether his character is very smart or very dumb.) Ernie and Mike don't appear to have any strong larcenous impulses, and so they don't arouse our own. They don't seem meant to: the film views burglary as a morally neutral trade or skill. (This is like Nietzsche on a bad day.) At the end, we realize that we're intended to feel the buddyship of the pair—that somehow, because of the construction of the story, it's supposed to be self-evident.

All the contrasts and symmetry might be miraculous in a farce, but in a movie about how professional small-time criminals live and practice their trades, this formal patterning seems consciously quaint. Forsyth may have imagined that he could go around the margins of the quaintness and show us

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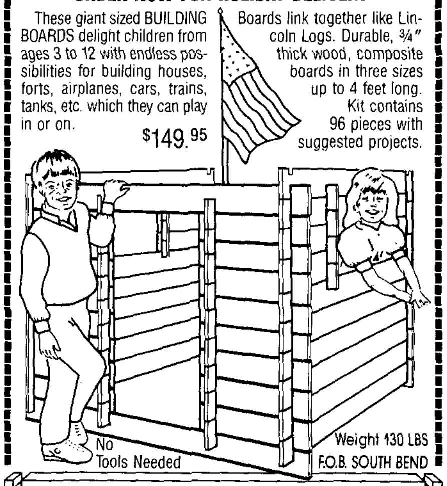

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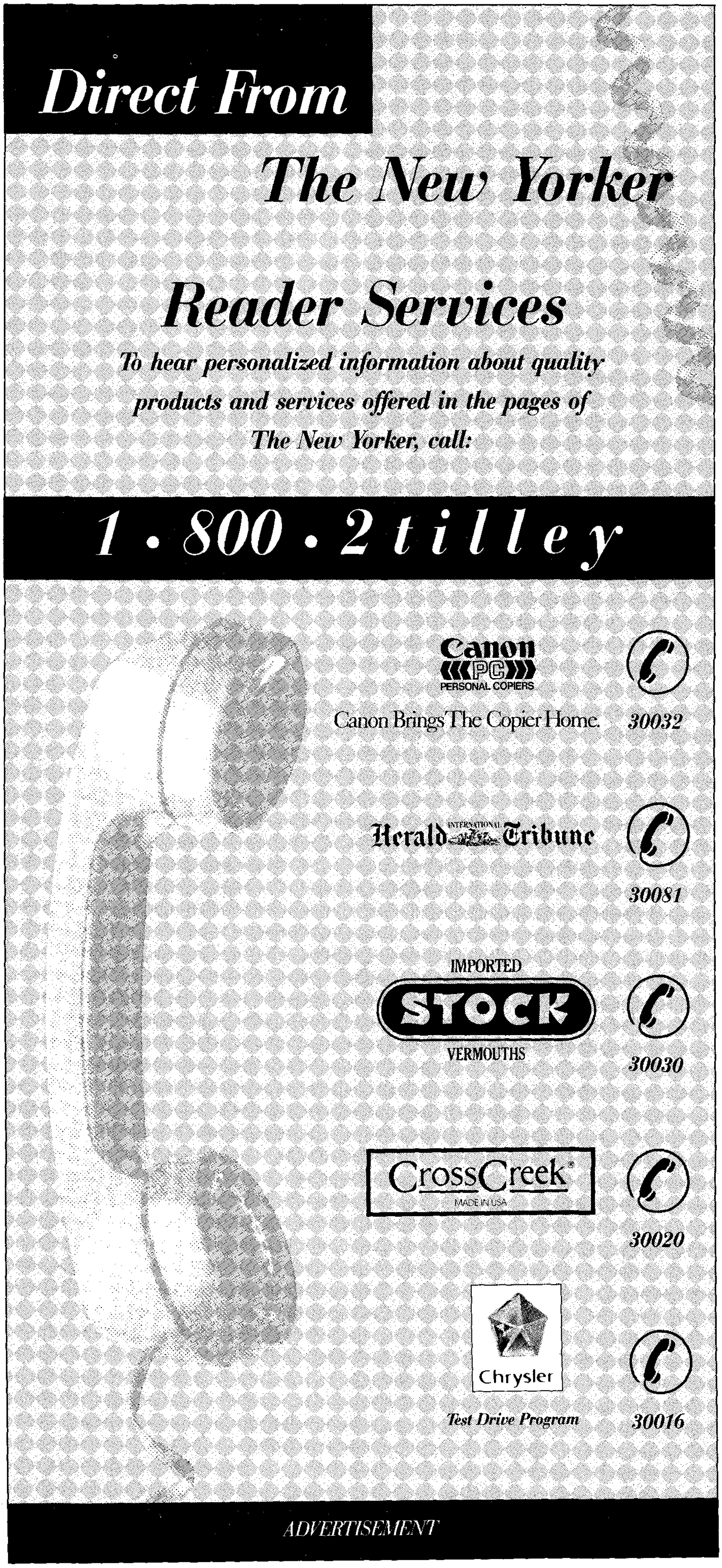
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I DOUBT if the acting in America movies has ever been as good as it i right now. It's not just that the genera level is very high; it's that some performers shoot way up above that level There are inspired performances in th sort of popular movies where you don' expect them. "Turner & Hooch" is n more than a well-made comic Rin-Tin-Tin movie, but its light, flexibl star, Tom Hanks, transcends it. Di-anne Wiest does high-style comedy i "Parenthood"—the kind of actin that won acclaim for Broadway stars i the thirties. And in the ludicrousl feral new revenge melodrama "Johnn Handsome" Morgan Freeman an Forest Whitaker, playing antagonist —a tough-minded veteran police detective and a warm, idealistic priso doctor—have a couple of scenes together that crackle. Whitaker is planning to perform plastic surgery on young hoodlum (Mickey Rourke) grotesquely disfigured from birth, o the theory that the kid will go straigh if he's made handsome. Freeman listens to Whitaker and grins in disbelief: how can anyone be this innocent? Whitaker, with his fine, serious presence, holds his ground. The antagonism between the two is credible, and it's tickling to see them together. The story is a tortuous reworking of Joan Crawford's 1941 vehicle "A Woman's Face" (which was a remake of a Swedish film with Ingrid Bergman); the big change is that the new film's slant is cruelly kinky. (It's as if "A Woman's Face" were redone, with the Crawford character once again surgically transformed and all—only now in the last scene somebody throws acid at her.) The movie is hardly worth talking about, except that, in addition to Freeman, with his sharp wit, and Whitaker, with his expressiveness, there's someone turning up every few minutes who goes way beyond competence: Scott Wilson as Rourke's only buddy, David Schramm as a money-launderer, Raynor Scheine (a gimmick name?) as a gun dealer. The director, Walter Hill, must love actors (despite his enthusiasm for having them punched and pistol-whipped).

—PAULINE KAEL

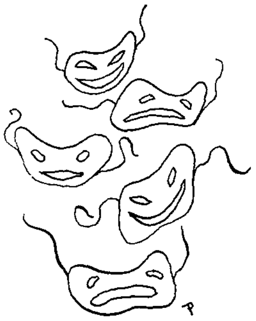
THE THEATRE

A Death in the Family

A MODEST, thoroughly satisfying play called "The Aunts," by Gary Bonasorte—a dramatist new to me but obviously not to his craft—opened last week at the Forty-seventh Street. (Mr. Bonasorte, according to his program bio, has had several plays produced in regional theatres; this is his first in New York.) The Forty-seventh Street is not as tony as it sounds—it's the old firehouse that Miriam Colón converted into headquarters for her Puerto Rican Travelling Company some years ago. The performances, with Bethel Leslie, Mia Dillon, and Ann Wedgeworth—actresses with the highest credentials—in the leading roles, under Charles Maryan's direction, are as good as any in town, on or off Broadway.

"The Aunts" is set in the living room of a house in Pittsburgh in 1979. At the opening, a woman named Meg (Miss Leslie) is talking on the phone to a pharmacist and asking him to identify some unlabelled pills she has found on the premises. Meg, it turns out, has come to be with her shaken and exhausted sister, Nan (Miss Wedgeworth), whose husband is upstairs in agony, dying of cancer. A niece of Meg and Nan's, Pita (Miss Dillon), has also come to help out; going on thirty, she is fat, ungainly, and noisy—the sort of person who shouts "He looks terrible!" right outside the sickroom door. Pita, whose plumpness appears a little suspect, displays a new dress that practically spells maternity (though not to her distracted, undiscerning aunts), and—with more optimism than realism—spends a good deal of time leafing through wedding-gown catalogues.

Having read that marijuana eases the pain of cancer, one of the aunts persuades Pita to find some. She comes back with enough to bake into brownies for all, with bracing consequences. Basket after basket of flowers arrives for the invalid—a practical joke, it turns out, played by Meg's husband (Christopher Wynkoop), a bully (and a two-timing one besides) who wants her back home. When he arrives to tell her so, the air blackens with their rage. Pita, with her customary finesse, butts in and tries to stop the fight—to no avail. Pita is all thumbs in most of life's small transactions, but she is, we learn at the final curtain, not so dumb in its larger ones.



The situation presented in "The Aunts" is certainly sad, but the play is anything but depressing. There is a lot of humor, much of it provided by Miss Dillon, who becomes a more and more endearing cluck as time goes by. Portraying feelings in all their variety, the play celebrates them. The strongest and most complex feelings here are those of the sisters for each other—compounded of love, trust, and irritability in about equal proportions. Miss Wedgeworth, distraught, dishevelled, all nerves, a beautiful woman brought low by grief, and Miss Leslie, clear and considerate and in charge, support the play in every way. Mr. Bonasorte is a lucky man.

I hope that "The Aunts" wins the success it deserves here, but if it doesn't it will surely flourish in many other places for years to come. It might be mentioned that there are a number of unfashionable attitudes on display (unfashionable off Broadway, that is)—among them that the presence of God may be taken for granted. The setting, lighting, and costumes—by Atkin Pace, John Gleason, and Lana Fritz, respectively—are as admirable and on key as every other aspect of the production.

—EDITH OLIVER

•

You are on water the color of sapphire. Ahead, an ivory beach in a secluded cove. Beyond, a terraced sanctum filled with lavish pleasures. Will you watch the sunset from here or from your balcony? Tonight shall it be shrimp en brochette or something simple? Should you stroll the cobblestone streets of the city or stay and dance the night away? And while you enjoy any or all of it, there beside you will be . . . whom?—*Adv. in KCET Magazine.*

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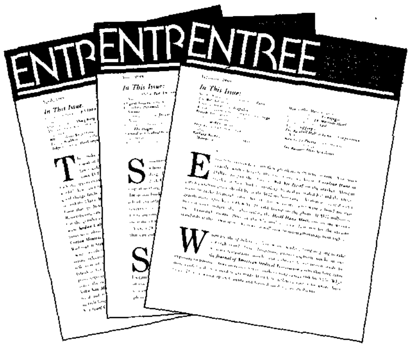

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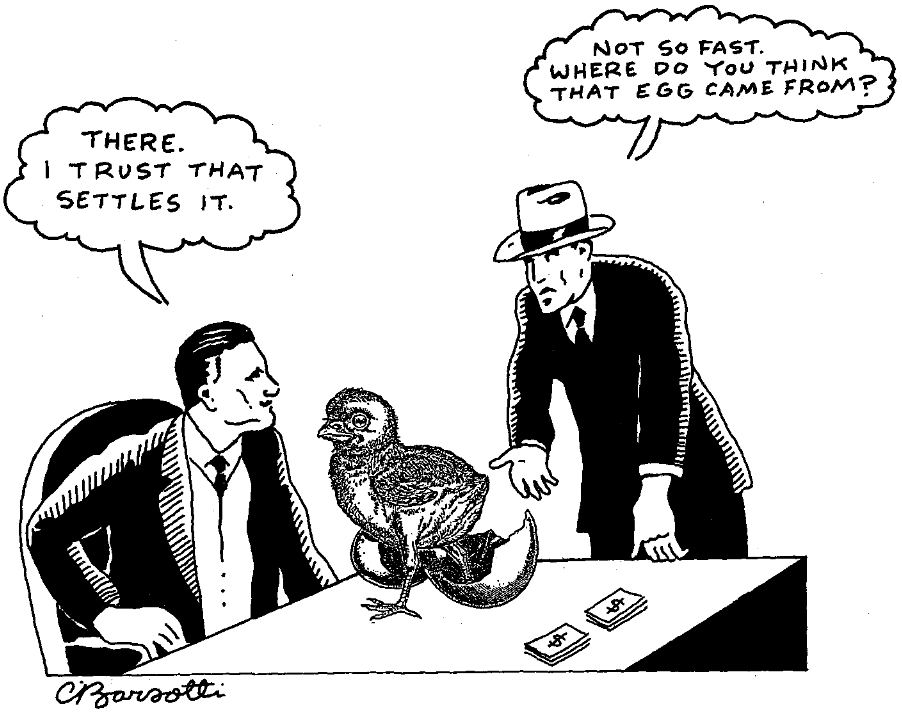
LETTER FROM BOGOTÁ

OCTOBER 3

AMONG the few people to have benefitted from the current faceoff between the government and the cocaine traffickers are Bogotá's windowpane fitters. The other morning, at an apartment building that had been left glassless as a result of a nearby explosion, there were three teams of them, trotting from a lineup of flatbed trucks to the damaged building with enormous rectangles of glass in their mittened hands, maneuvering each one into place by means of suction cups, clambering back into an apartment through the nearest gaping window, and barely pausing to puff a little and ease their backs before picking up the next pane. "Every morning, we turn on the radio and wait for the announcement," one of them told me, "and then when we hear it we go, 'Bomb explosion! Let's get to work!' And we set out for whatever address they give on the newscast. There have been a lot of bombs, but there are a lot of glaziers, too, so it's not really *that* much extra work, but I've done four or five buildings already myself."

The man said his name was Carlos López, and added, as he and his partner eased another pane of glass out of their truck, that he expected to be extremely busy that day. Eleven bombs had gone off the previous night, most of them in this neighborhood, which is called Teusaquillo and is one of the pleasantest in Bogotá. It dates from the nineteen-thirties, and if the orderly rows of red brick houses with tile roofs don't quite achieve the English look that was so clearly intended, it is partly the fault of the vegetation—splendid purple-flowered *sietecueros* trees along the curved streets, and blood-red begonias and blue agapanthus crowded into the narrow front yards. There are a few modern apartment buildings here, several unpretentious brick churches, and—a blessing in a city plagued by noise and congestion—not much traffic, even though Teusaquillo is only a fifteen-minute drive from the downtown area, where Congress, the National Palace, and several government ministries are clustered. The major parties and a good many important politicians have their headquarters in Teusaquillo, so that when the cocaine traffickers decided to launch an attack on what is known here as *la clase política* it took only eight minutes, and two cars cruising down the neighborhood with several charges of dynamite, to devastate the campaign headquarters of nine politicians. Because the streets here are not very wide, the detonations shattered an inordinate amount of glass, some of it as much as two blocks away from the target sites. Thus Carlos López's euphoria as he saw himself surrounded by buildings full of business potential.

In the way Colombians have of taking all disasters in stride, López's prospective clients were neither hysterical nor outraged as they stood in clusters outside their windy apartments, comparing notes to see which glazier was offering the best price. One woman, still recovering from the fright of waking up a few hours earlier to the sound of ever-closer detonations, until an enormous one sent a storm of glass shards flying into her bedroom, was still amused to note how the window men had knocked at her door, offering cards and taking measurements, even before the clock struck seven.


NOT SO FAST. WHERE DO YOU THINK THAT EGG CAME FROM?
THERE. I TRUST THAT SETTLES IT.
CBarsotti

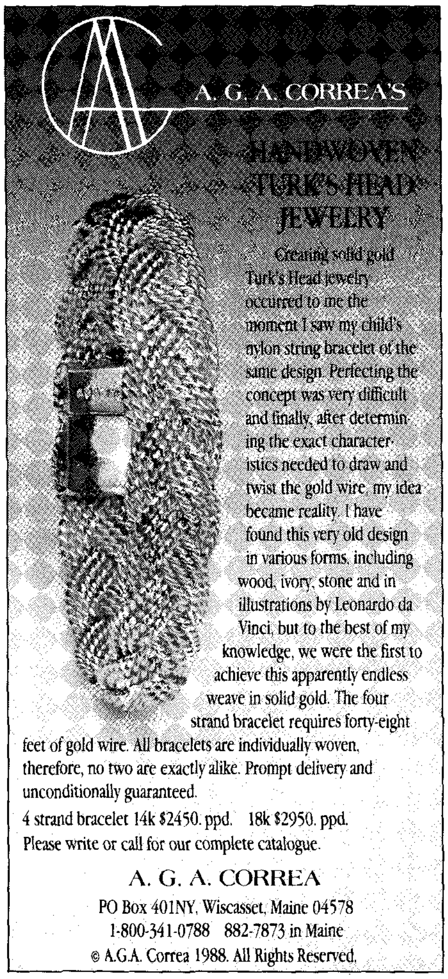
The aftermaths of the first several dozen bomb attacks launched by the narcotics trade in response to the joint United States–Colombian anti-drug offensive have had in common this slightly festive air. At least, people seemed to be thinking, things weren't worse. At least there was only broken glass. No one was hurt. Indeed, given the relish and the creativity with which the drug traffickers have employed violence in the past, the bombs have seemed unimpressive; by Colombian standards, these last three weeks have been extraordinarily calm. Following the murder of the Presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán, on August 18th, and President Virgilio Barco's use of his emergency powers to set up an extradition arrangement with the United States, Bogotanos had spent weeks in a stifling mood of depression and fear: The worst political assassinations of the last few years have been committed in the name of Los Extraditables, an ad-hoc alliance of drug traffickers whose slogan is "Better a grave in Colombia than a jail in the United States!" What horrible retribution would the traffickers plot as a response to Barco's extradition decree? Another individual murder—of a Cabinet member, perhaps? Or would a bomb be set off in a crowded supermarket, a cinema, a plane? Any of this may happen as of today, when the Supreme Court ruled that the extradition decrees are constitutional, but since September 2nd, when a massive bomb caused severe damage to the crusading anti-drug newspaper *El Espectador*, there have been no major assassinations, kidnappings, or truck bombs in Bogotá. Homicide and burglary rates are down by more than fifty per cent from their usual levels—a hiatus that was taken as a form of communication from the drug trade: people read in it the traffickers' restrained menace, their decision to hold off on the real stuff until the Supreme Court decision.

In the meantime, there were the bombs, a few small explosions a night. In contrast to Medellín, where a similar campaign against banks and restaurants, and even a country club, caused several injuries, the bombs here were almost always set off at times when no one was likely to get injured or killed. After three weeks of this, one of my neighbors took stock of the damage and wondered, "Is that all there is? Just a few little bombs?" And when I asked a member of one of Colombia's prominent political families whether the confrontation between the government and the drug traffickers could destabilize the government his reply was scornful. "These people don't even know where to put their bombs," he said. "They're so ignorant and provincial that they declare war on us, the leading class, and they don't know how to strike us where it hurts. They put a bomb in the Medellín country club, because Medellín is where they're from, but, I assure you, they don't even know where the Bogotá Country Club is. They don't even know that there is one."

This man thought the traffickers were floundering, and there is evidence that the Bogotá-based operations of one of the bloodiest and most sought-after of the traffickers, Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha, have been nearly dismantled. But there is no indication yet that the drug traffickers as a group have suffered any damage to their strike capability. Instead, the bombs in Teusaquillo appear as one more episode in a purposeful and unhurried response to the joint Barco-Bush anti-drug offensive: the traffickers have simply decided to ignore the government's confrontational tactics, opting instead for their own version of low-intensity warfare, with low-cost, low-risk strikes against almost every area of public life. Telephone substations have been hit, putting forty-four thousand lines out of service at a time. Government savings-and-loan associations have put on extra security but are still being targeted. Movie houses are emptier now that a small bomb went off in the men's room of a neighborhood cinema. There was an escalation of terror last week, when a bomb in a hotel room in the resort city of Cartagena killed two doctors attending a convention. Here, a spate of weekend bombs at public elementary schools is keeping children home while repairs are made.

THE relative restraint—the delicacy, even—displayed by the drug traffickers in their choice of targets was in sharp contrast to their reckless use of violence in the months preceding Galán's murder. This is, after all, the year that opened with a direct challenge to government authority when two investigating judges (or district attorneys) and ten members of their team were ambushed and executed in the course of an investigation of drug-related murders in the countryside. The judges belonged to the Public Order Courts, which were set up by the government last year following the murder of Attorney General Carlos Mauro Hoyos and endowed with special powers to investigate and sentence drug- and guerrilla-related crimes. The Public Order Courts had been quite effective in building cases and issuing indictments against the major drug traffickers. The Army and the national investigative police, for their part, were pursuing an unusually vigorous offensive against major cocaine laboratories. The *narcotraficantes* struck back. In May, although a car bomb miraculously failed to kill General Miguel Maza Márquez, the head of the investigative police, six other people died. In July, another car bomb killed the governor of the *departamento* of Antioquia, whose capital is Medellín. Later that month came the murder of a Public Order judge who had issued an arrest warrant on the Medellín-based trafficker Pablo Escobar in relation to several mass murders last year. On August 17th, another judge who had charges pending against Escobar was killed, and then, on August 18th, gunmen assassinated the Antioquia chief of police. That evening, as President Barco was preparing to go on the air to announce a series of drastic measures against the cocaine trade, including the revival of extradition procedures and an expropriation decree aimed at the trade's luxury homes and cattle ranches, Galán, the clear popular favorite among six pretenders to the Liberal Party candidacy, and the reported choice of Barco himself, was shot at a campaign rally on the outskirts of Bogotá.

Public opinion immediately ascribed



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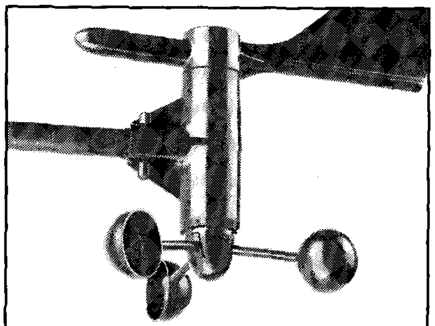

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the murder to Escobar, and Bogotanos with any political or social prestige, money, or intellectual influence spent the ensuing days reviewing every detail and every rumor in an attempt to understand why Escobar had chosen to kill Galán at that particular time, their hope being thus to find an answer to a second, more pressing question: Am I next? Those were ugly weeks of expectation, but in the ensuing dead calm two more questions arose: How badly have the traffickers been hurt by the offensive? How will they strike next?

The most logically constructed explanation for Galán's murder is that the killing was plotted single-handedly by Pablo Escobar ("one of the twenty richest men outside the United States, according to *Fortune*," reporters cannot resist writing), who is said to have a thing about revenge. Reportedly, he has been unable to forget that it was Galán's political movement that drummed him out of Congress in 1984.

Galán, privately a soft-spoken and conciliatory man, was also scrupulously honest, and as a result he often found himself in situations that required him to play the role of firebrand or rebel. In Congress, his magnificent leonine face and old-fashioned oratorical style served him well, and, being pragmatic and occasionally eager to please, he could have progressed swiftly up through the Liberal Party ranks had he not spent the late nineteen-seventies denouncing his party's increasing corruption and cronyism. He finally broke with the Party leadership in 1980 and, together with a group of other intelligent, ambitious young politicians, founded a breakaway movement called Nuevo Liberalismo.

One of the co-founders was Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, another senator. Escobar had bought himself a great deal of popularity in the poor neighborhoods of Medellín by then, financing squatter housing and paying for things like funerals and soccer uniforms for people there. In 1982, under the sponsorship of an influential senator named Alberto Santofimio, he joined the Liberal Party and ran for Congress as an alternate representative for the *departamento* of Antioquia. The titular candidate, Jairo Ortega, won an easy victory, possibly thanks to generous amounts of Escobar campaign money. When Lara Bonilla was appointed Justice Minister in 1983, he launched an investigation of illegal contributions to political campaigns, and focussed specifically on Ortega and Escobar. Shortly afterward, the newspaper *El Espectador* published a story disclosing that Escobar had been arrested in 1976 as a minor cocaine trafficker, and he was publicly disowned by his one-time sponsor Santofimio. Less than two years after his election, Escobar was forced to withdraw from public life. A few months later, Lara Bonilla was murdered.

According to the revenge interpretation of recent history, Galán's murder was simply thorough-minded Escobar getting rid of one more Nuevo Liberalista, although a sub-rumor adds that Escobar had got wind of President Barco's plan to revive the extradition process and had decided to combine past and future revenge in a single blow: he struck against the man who had helped disgrace him, against Barco's program, and against the President's chosen candidate and likely successor.

This is a comforting version of events to most of those who might be wondering if they are on a hit list, because at this stage there are barely a half-dozen Nuevo Liberalismo founders still alive—among them, former Justice Minister and Ambassador to Hungary Enrique Parejo González, who survived a 1987 attempt on his life in Budapest, and Galán's widow, Gloria Pachón, who continued to receive death threats every half hour following her husband's murder and who is leaving for Paris as Colombia's envoy to UNESCO.

There is also an important, optimistic corollary to the revenge theory, and it holds that Escobar acted not only alone in ordering Galán's murder but against the wise counsel of the elder statesmen of the drug trade, the Ochoa clan. When members of "the leading class" argue that all drug exporters should not be considered equal, they invariably point out that the trafficking Ochoa brothers—Juan David, Jorge Luis, and Fabio, Jr.—come from "a good Antioquia family," meaning, among other things, that the Ochoas can be relied on for levelheaded business decisions. Although they have lately been at war with still other traffickers—the Rodríguez Orejuela

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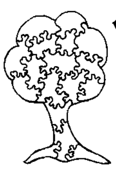

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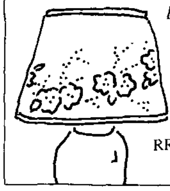

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brothers, based in Cali, who control most cocaine shipments to New York—rumor has it that the Ochoas and the Rodríguez Orejuelas in Cali are now willing to talk, to each other and to the government, because Escobar keeps ordering assassinations and the resulting government crackdowns are bad for the trade. The extravagant and particularly unnecessary murder of Galán, who was neither a law-enforcement official nor a pro-extradition crusader, exhausted the patience of the Ochoas and the Cali traders. Escobar and Rodríguez Gacha are now on the run, abandoned by their colleagues and with a two-hundred-and-fifty-thousand-dollar price on their heads. The strongest evidence that the government, the Ochoas, and the Cali traders are in some sort of agreement, the rumor concludes, is that the government is offering its quarter-million-dollar bounty for information leading to the capture of Escobar and Rodríguez Gacha and nobody else.

THE rogue-traffickers-on-the-run theory could be interpreted as a victory of sorts for the government; in the absence of a real decline in the world demand for cocaine, or of a public-relations coup like the capture of a major trafficker, it is hard to judge what else could constitute measurable progress in the current offensive. It was easier in the early days, immediately after Galán's murder, when the mood of fear was counterbalanced by the excitement of intensive and well-publicized raids on property owned by drug traffickers. Gold-plated bathroom basins and white grand pianos, transparent acrylic dining-room sets and mock-medieval architecture were on the news every evening. There were daily tallies of ranchland acreage seized, a major policy speech on the subject of drugs by the President of the United States, and detailed coverage of the capture and extradition, to Atlanta, Georgia, of a middle-level cocaine-money launderer. But none of this has added up to increased popular support for the weakest President in recent Colombian history, and, despite the Supreme Court's surprising decision in his favor this evening, it is still very much a question whether Barco will have a mandate to pursue a war with so many noncombatant casualties. I have not talked to a single Colombian—of whatever income level or political per-

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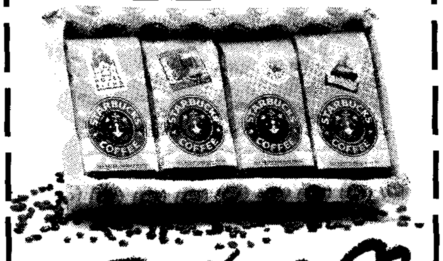

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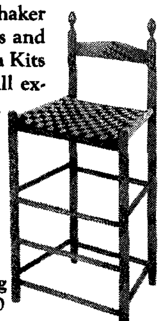

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suasion—who believes the drug traffickers can be permanently defeated as long as the United States continues to provide a market. In the face of this perceived invincibility, how could the man the leading weekly *Semana* once described as "the worst communicator among contemporary heads of state" persuade anyone that the cost of the war—the bombs, the murders, the generalized fear—is worth paying?

With his wispy hair and thin voice, Barco is singularly ungifted for public life; he is resented when he disappears from public view, which is often, and is mocked when he speaks. When he is trying to sound cheerful, he comes off as flippant, and when he is being serious he sounds peevish. Although his virtues are grudgingly recognized—he is undeniably honest, persevering, meticulous—they do not produce affection. Oddly, it was his weaknesses that got him elected: as mayor of Bogotá, his reputation as a first-rate administrator with no taste for politicking appealed to an electorate weary of President Belisario Betancur's bubbly charm and flamboyant political initiatives; Barco played Water Rat to Betancur's Toad of Toad Hall. But three years in power have in no way improved Barco's effectiveness as a politician. He has not been able to hold on to his Cabinet members, and following the mishandled firing/resignation of his Justice Minister, Mónica de Greiff, two weeks ago, and rumblings of discontent from the Interior Minister over the extradition issue, he is now looking for his seventh Justice Minister and fifth Interior Minister. Nor has he proved skillful at the pork-barrel handouts any President needs to keep his party happy in Congress, and now, with less than ten months left in office, he is a lame duck as well. All the luckier, then, that as the drug offensive appeared to be losing momentum the Supreme Court should overcome its historical dislike of extradition measures and grant Barco what is probably his most important political victory to date. Today's decision was a reversal of all previous positions—proving, a Colombian journalist at *El Espectador* said happily, "that the Court is no longer avoiding the burden of the drug crisis."

Extradition involved getting the Colombian government to override its own legislation and authorize the trial, sentencing, and incarceration of its citizens in a foreign country. There are powerful and logical reasons why the United States government should want this: there are reams of charges against the most well-known drug traffickers in the United States, while there are virtually no charges against them in Colombia. Few traffickers have ever been captured here, and none have been successfully held for more than a few weeks; the only major Colombian cocaine figure currently in jail is Carlos Lehder, who was captured in 1987—just before the most recent bilateral extradition treaty collapsed—and spirited off to Florida, where he was sentenced to a jail term of life plus a hundred and thirty-five years, no parole.

Colombian arguments against extradition are not so neat, and to the degree that they come wrapped in intense nationalist feeling they make many United States listeners impatient. The first argument—defended for a long time by Conservatives like Betancur—is simply that citizens have an inalienable right to be tried in their own country. There are others, subtle and less popular: for example, that Colombia's historical weakness has been the lack of a strong central state capable of imposing the rule of law on its population, and that by abdicating this obligation through extradition the government will effectively usher in an era of lawlessness more dire and bloody than anything that has been known in the past. Another, put forward by students of the cocaine market, is that the capture of any major trafficker—or even all of them—will have absolutely no long-term effect on cocaine supply, that the United States' cocaine problem will be solved only when its citizens stop demanding cocaine, and that it is arrogant for the United States government to demand a measure that produces so little result, at the price of so much pain to the people of a country it otherwise cares so little about.

Even so, no one here dared criticize extradition in the aftermath of Galán's murder. There was a consensus that an extraordinary situation called for extraordinary measures, and it was clear that Barco had a unique chance to obtain a favorable ruling from the Supreme Court, which—quite independently of the many threats against it

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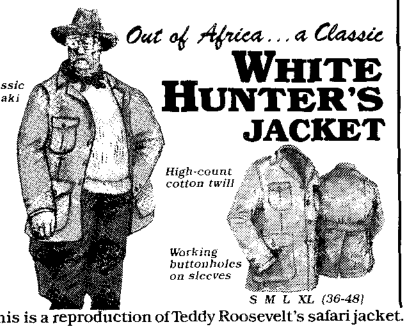

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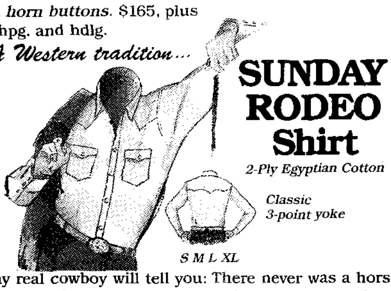

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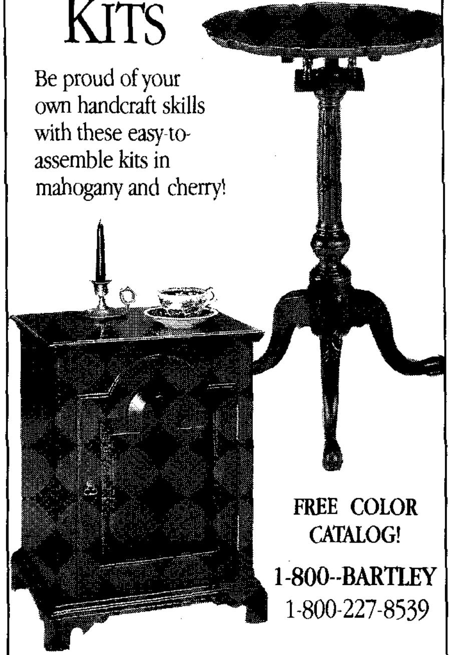
and the murder of one of its members over the issue—has historically looked askance on extradition. The aloof Barco reportedly took the uncharacteristic step of sounding out the Court before staking his political future on the emergency decrees. "It's my understanding that he consulted, and was told that the decrees would not be rejected out of hand," a legal expert with friends on the Court told me. When the last bilateral extradition treaty with the United States was knocked down by the Colombian Supreme Court, early in 1987, it led to a pause in the horrendous killings with which the traffickers had sought to intimidate proponents of extradition. When, after Galán was shot, President Barco announced that he was sidestepping constitutional limits on his right to legislate and single-handedly reviving extradition procedures for traffickers facing charges in the United States, the response was the bombing of *El Espectador*—whose previous editor, Guillermo Cano, had campaigned in favor of the extradition treaty and was murdered in December of 1986 as a result.

NOW, as we await the cocaine exporters' reaction, the question remains whether, despite the Supreme Court's backing, Barco has the strength to command the war he declared on drugs. In the absence of popular support, he needs to be able to fall back on a strong government, but the institutions of rule in Colombia are notoriously frail.

Three weeks into the big offensive, Barco's Interior Minister, Orlando Vásquez Velázquez, asked to address a session of the Chamber of Representatives, the lower house of Congress, in order to explain the emergency antidrug decrees and to obtain a vote of confidence from the representatives. When he arrived to deliver his scheduled address, he found the Chamber's doors locked. At the suggestion of the vice-president of the Chamber, the representatives had decided to hurry away and postpone a discussion on the delicate subject of drugs.

"This is a bad moment to judge what the state is capable of, because we are at the end of an administration," the dean of one of Bogotá's several law schools mused a few days after the congressional incident. "Of course, that means that this is not the best time



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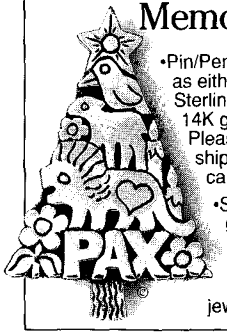

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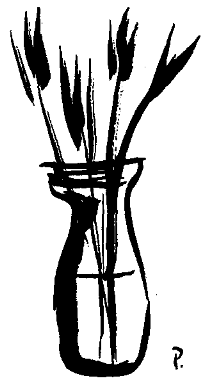

to attempt a principal and dangerous offensive. But there are also limitations that have nothing to do with the effectiveness of the President himself. The legislative branch, for example, is worthless. It's frightened, and when an entire branch of the state shows that it is intimidated this is very serious. But, unfortunately, this is a chronic problem, and not Barco's to solve: Congress has been ineffective for the last twenty-five years." But, the dean acknowledged, even by its own unimpressive standards the Chamber of Representatives' fear-induced boycott of the Interior Minister's anti-drug presentation was unheard of. It was true, he went on, that the judicial branch was powerless as well. "It is prostrate, lacking the most minimal capacity to react." There was no exaggeration in this: for lack of staff and resources, an estimated eighty per cent of all crimes are not prosecuted; of those that are, a million seven hundred thousand cases are currently awaiting sentencing each year. Less than three per cent of these receive verdicts. The country's twenty-five thousand judicial employees are not only underpaid and overworked but terrified; a hundred and twenty of them, including thirty-five judges, have been killed in the last few years. On a salary of under four hundred dollars a month, it is not every district-court judge who can afford a bodyguard.

In the dean's opinion, the high judicial death rate is in itself evidence that the system is not fundamentally corrupt. With adequate training for the judges, an adequate salary, better physical protection, and computers and other equipment vital to efficient criminal investigations, it would be possible for the courts to make significant progress against the drug trade's overwhelming impunity. But in its current economic straits the Colombian government will have to rely almost exclusively on United States assistance to finance improvement in its judicial system. Of the sixty-five-million-dollar aid package announced by President Bush last month, about eighty-five per cent is earmarked for the military and the rest is for the police. A separate five-million-dollar grant this spring largely went for emergency protection for the judiciary—bulletproof vests and armored cars—but the aid is barely more than symbolic; there are more than four thousand judges in Colombia, and the national justice system's employees association estimates that one out of five is under threat. At thirty-five thousand dollars per armored car, it would cost about thirty million dollars to provide protection for all of them. Given the circumstances, the law-school dean had to conclude that if the Cali traffickers and the Ochoa clan could be persuaded to deliver the corpses of Rodríguez Gacha and Escobar the country would be well served. Like everyone else, he did not think that talk of eliminating the cocaine trade was realistic as long as ravenous United States and European demand continued to create a market: "No democratic government can completely eradicate crime," he said. "But it can reduce immorality to its tolerable dimensions. The government can strike significant blows against crime, do away with two or three big traffickers. The trade will continue to exist, but we can control its destabilizing effects on society, on the economy, and on political life. The problem is that drug crime has spun out of control. The will to rein it in does exist, however, and I think that, despite everything, the judicial and executive branches together have enough strength to do it."

This is what could be called the New Pragmatism among the power élite, and one of its problems is that it reduces the idea of a drug offensive to rhetoric, while the cocaine traffickers consistently pursue a course of all or nothing. Of course, there are many people, including former members of Barco's inner circle, who think that the current offensive *is* rhetoric, on both the Colombian side and the United States side. George Bush declares a war on drugs and sends some fifty-five million dollars' worth of surplus—and inadequate—military equipment. The Colombian Army goes on an offensive and fails to launch a single significant strike against the cocaine exporters based in Cali, who probably account for the largest volume of cocaine shipped to the United States. "This is absurd, completely absurd," a former close adviser to President Barco said.

“All this—the emergency decrees, the U.S. trainers, the military offensive, the political risks—just to capture Escobar and Rodríguez Gacha?”

“YOU know what really gets me?” a journalist friend of mine from *El Espectador* burst out a couple of weeks ago. We were watching a television newscaster announce that in Washington the Drug Enforcement Administration had just confirmed the extradition to the United States of the second-level cocaine-money launderer who was captured here in the first days of the raids. In expectation of immediate retaliation from the cocaine trade, the members of the paper’s staff had been advised to lock themselves indoors. “What really kills me,” my friend said, duly locked away, “is that we’re now stuck with the extradition policy, whether we like it or not, and, for lack of a better policy, we’re honor bound to defend this one. You know perfectly well that someone is going to die—something dreadful is going to happen—as a result of this extradition tonight, and it won’t even be for the sake of any really major figure. All this destruction will take place just so the United States can have its symbolic bringing to justice, even if it’s of some second-rate flunky who’s worth nothing to it.”

The visceral charge of this reaction was typical. Anti-United States sentiment is not overt here (as the local saying goes, “From Miami, you can see Heaven”), but it is a volatile constant in the national mood. (This is the country that lost the Isthmus of Panama during an uprising instigated by the United States.) There have been anti-extradition rock-throwing incidents sponsored by the left and, after the press leaked the names of congressmen who are no longer allowed entry into the United States—including onetime Escobar associates Alberto Santofimio and Jairo Ortega—a series of fiery counterattacks by the injured parties, charging the C.I.A. and the Drug Enforcement Administration with Galán’s murder. None of this goes very far, but if anti-Yankee rage becomes an issue for the first time during a Colombian electoral campaign this year, it will largely be because Colombians feel their government’s arm is being twisted on the extradition issue.

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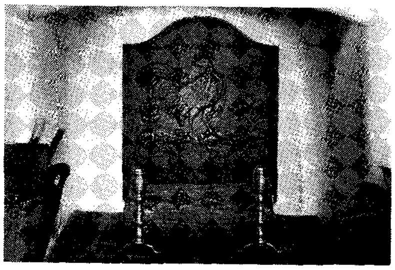

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ment: What will dispirited voters make of the array of candidates, who are supposed to represent hope but seem shell-shocked? There is the personable Conservative Party candidate Diego Pardo Koppel, for example, whose headquarters was the one most badly hit the night of the Teusaquillo bombs, and whose private secretary, Alvaro López Acevedo, has received "about nine" death threats over the phone since Galán's murder. Sitting in the rubble the morning after the bombing, López affirmed that Pardo Koppel's campaign for the Senate would continue, but said five minutes later, with no apparent sense of contradiction, that "there is no climate for political campaigning now." How will Pardo run a campaign if it's impossible to have one?

And how will voters respond to the presidential candidacy of César Gaviria, former Interior Minister and the late Luis Carlos Galán's campaign coördinator, who sobbed at his candidate's funeral and was sworn in as his replacement a month after the murder? Gaviria, a skillful backstage politician and an efficient administrator, completely lacks his predecessor's popular appeal. Are Galán's followers being asked to vote for his ghost? Will they?

They could decide to vote instead for the normally ebullient Ernesto Samper, also of the reformist wing of the Liberal Party. He has been slowed down a little since last March, when eleven bullets kept him hospitalized for two months with near-fatal septicemia, but he says that his survival vindicates a lifetime's worth of optimism. Yet his demeanor is often solemn these days—brooding, even—and prospective voters, contemplating his campaign team, his security apparatus, and his recent past, could also find themselves sinking into a certain gloom.

Eight months ago, as Samper was waiting to check in for a local flight at the Bogotá airport, he spotted José Antequera, a representative for the city of Barranquilla, standing in another line. Antequera, a member of the leftist Unión Patriótica party, was well liked by many Liberal and Conservative politicians. He was open-minded, pragmatic, exceptionally bright, and possessed of the essential political talent for forging alliances. At a time when, according to all indications, nearly eight hundred members of his party had been killed by Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha's right-wing *narcoparamilitares*, Antequera was trying to protect the Patriotic Union by distancing it from its guerrilla origins and strengthening its congressional links with the other parties. He had been quite successful at this, but when Samper went over to say hello to him at the airport he found Antequera tense. "He told me that he was under very serious threat," Samper recalled on a recent afternoon. "And that he was going to Barranquilla for a rest, because he was feeling very anxious. As he was saying that, I heard the first shots." A *sicario*, or hired assassin, was emptying his machine gun into Antequera, and a spray of bullets hit Samper in the lower abdomen. He was saved by his wife, Jacquin, who threw herself across his body and screamed at his stunned bodyguard, "Kill the *sicario!*," which the bodyguard did. Antequera was already dead, but Samper, who saw blood on his finger and thought he had been wounded only in the hand, hung on to life. His wife dragged him behind the check-in counter, onto the luggage conveyor belt, and out onto the tarmac, where she flagged down an airport van and instructed the driver to race for the nearest hospital.

When Samper had recovered, he resumed his campaign. Horacio Serpa, who is one of the most seriously threatened men in Colombia as a result of his outspoken denunciations of the *narcoparamilitares*, resigned his post as Attorney General to act as Samper's campaign manager. This week, Mónica de Greiff, who as Justice Minister received meticulously detailed threats against herself and her family, announced that she was joining the team. When Samper and Serpa go campaigning, as they did this weekend to Medellín, they wear bulletproof vests and are protected by a security detail of more than four hundred men. Samper has taken to joking that the current campaign is not about who will be selected for the Liberal candidacy but about who will survive to claim it, and he could add that voters may well make their choice not on the basis of which candidate they prefer but of which one is likeliest to live out his four-year term.

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Two weeks ago, when Samper arrived at his campaign headquarters for a scheduled interview, he was preceded by a bodyguard, who had the candidate wait outside while he went through every room in the house, automatic gun in hand, looking for strangers. When he had finished his search, a second bodyguard inspected the candidate's office, checking in the closets and under the sofa cushions for bombs. Finally, Samper was ushered in, and a bodyguard closed the door and remained waiting in the hall.

"It's very difficult, you know," Samper admitted, with a sigh. "We had to move our headquarters this month, because we received serious threats that they were going to bomb it, and the house was on an exposed corner. It was hard to find anyone willing to rent to us. These last weeks, I've felt, for the first time, that people are afraid of being near me, because I'm a politician. The neighbors in my apartment building would like me to leave, and I understand why. The first thing their children see when they go to school in the morning is six men with machine guns. Of course they're scared!" As for the campaign itself, now that most of the candidates had decided to keep open-air appearances to a minimum, Samper said, "It's almost impossible to find anyone willing to rent you a meeting hall. My wife and I decided to raise funds with an art auction, and we hired the Gun Club"—an elegant private club. "We paid for it, mind you, and signed a contract, and everything. But the day before the auction was going to be held somebody called and said they knew about the auction and they were going to bomb it. When the Gun Club cancelled on us, I told them they were committing a profoundly undemocratic act. We held the auction somewhere else at the last minute, and, of course, it was a complete failure. Now, where is someone like me, who is hated by the *narcotraficantes* and not particularly liked by the big interest groups, going to find funds

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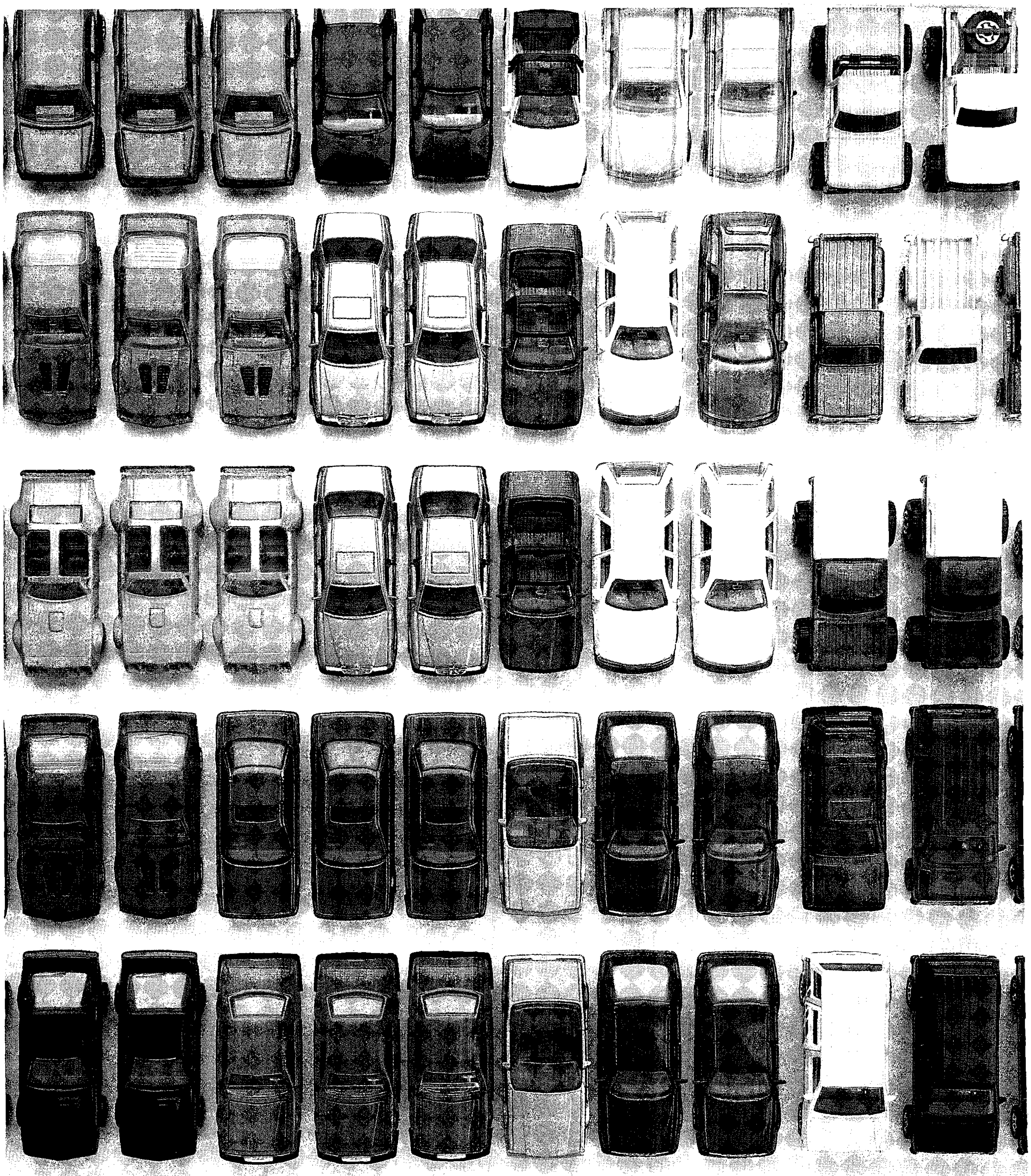

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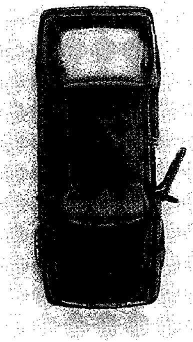

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to campaign in this country if it's impossible even to rent a hall?"

I remarked to Samper that he was not sounding optimistic.

He disagreed. "You can't get into a Presidential race if you're pessimistic," he said. "I'm not out for martyrdom. I think I can win, and I think I know what has to be done. There are still moral, economic, and institutional reserves to draw on in Colombia. But there is no doubt that we are facing a huge task. The problem is that we let violence and the drug traffic go too far before we reacted. Just as there is a climate of tolerance in the United States with regard to drug use, there has been a climate of tolerance among us for the traffickers—a certain predisposition to live alongside them."

And now there was the immediate problem of getting voters to overcome their fear. "People are afraid," he said. "This country feels as if someone had turned out the light."

If Samper has a new awareness of the depressive atmosphere, it is because he is tuned in to the changes in mood of the middle class, a natural constituency he shared with Galán. The country has recently enjoyed a construction boom and a phenomenal expansion in the luxury-service sector—restaurants, boutiques, hair salons, and travel agencies—which benefitted the upwardly mobile. All this was financed largely with drug money, while the trade's seamier activities—mass murders of left-wing peasants, gang warfare, corruption of government institutions—barely touched the middle class, whose reaction to the drug problem in the past has covered the range of indifference. But Samper's accidental shooting shook his followers, and Galán's murder has brought home the implications of terror to people who had previously had no reason to consider themselves targets, and therefore enemies, of the drug exporters. Galán's funeral was attended by multitudes, in a rare explosion of collective middle-class outrage, but it is not clear how this all-important sector of the population will react if a full-blown terror campaign with human casualties gets under way now that the extradition decree has been ratified. The reaction of the middle class will be a weathervane of sorts, and will strengthen either the lonely Barco or those who would like to see an increased role for the military in making government decisions or, yet again, people like the mayor of Medellín, a Conservative, who believes that, in the absence of legalization of the drug trade, a settlement of some sort with its illegal traffickers is necessary. The mayor, Juan Gómez Martínez, has never been suspected of links with the drug world, nor is he alone in his opinion: the president of the Chamber of Representatives, having announced earlier that he has always favored dialogue—"even with my enemies"—quietly let it be known last month that he had had two "brief, respectful, and threat-free" phone conversations on the subject with Rodríguez Gacha and Pablo Escobar. How any deal could be made in the face of vehement United States opposition is an unaddressed question, but the talk being bandied about is of an arrangement that would allow the traffickers to stand trial here for minor crimes, say, and to put their badly needed money into the regular economy.

There might as well be a curfew, so empty are the streets and restaurants after dark in this normally night-loving city, and as of this evening the tension is perceptible even in the dead silence all around. Anything could happen: deaths, major drug arrests and extraditions, Presidential fumbling. But what could also happen over the next few months is that Colombia could remain more or less as it always has been—with the government neither victorious nor defeated, the situation neither settled nor chaotic, the country neither at war nor at peace. "Something like that is what will happen," the man who belongs to what he calls "the leading class" said recently. "And that will be the best thing. What people here haven't understood is that this war isn't against the drug trade but against the drug traffickers—two of them. The other war has to be won in the United States, not here. But if we get rid of Escobar and Rodríguez Gacha—and they have to be killed, because if they are captured alive the consequences will be extremely bloody—everything can go back to the way it was before."

"That would probably be the saddest solution of all," the law-school dean said. "It would mean that Colombia has once again shown its capacity to adjust to everything."

THERE was a bomb two Sundays ago on one of the major avenues, at the point where it crosses an up-

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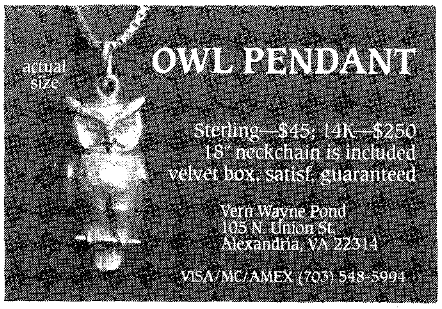
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per-middle-class residential area. The bomb itself was not unusual—it was only one of the forty or so that have gone off in the last three weeks. What was startling was the fact that it exploded almost exactly in front of the spot where a car bomb nearly killed General Maza Márquez, the police chief, in May. The car-bomb explosion opened a crater in the pavement five metres across, left six dead and more than fifty wounded, shattered almost every windowpane within a two-block radius, and thoroughly terrified the residents of the tall apartment buildings along Carrera Séptima. To hit the same spot twice seemed mean even by narco standards, but there it was: the shattered glass sprayed all over the street, the collapsed façade of a travel agency on the corner where the bomb was placed, the winking red lights and nasty wail of the police vans, the startled, shivering residents standing on the sidewalk again, staring.

They were getting used to it, though, they said. Enrique Sánchez and his wife—two kids who looked hardly old enough to be married—said that only two days before they had gone for a walk through Chapinero, a nearby shopping district, and got home in time to hear an explosion at a corner they had just walked by. "We were in the elevator, and it shook," Señora Sánchez said, giggling. And then the Thursday before there had been another bomb, and they'd heard that, too. Enrique Sánchez said that the explosions weren't the half of it. "I went for a run the other evening, and the Army stopped me, said I looked like I could be carrying a bomb. And just yesterday they stopped me in the car, because I drive a jeep—I guess like a lot of traffickers. They asked for my papers and saw that I was born in the town where Rodríguez Gacha had his headquarters; so they questioned me for a couple of hours. Can you imagine? We get the bombs, and they think we're the bombers!"

His wife, who thought all this was terribly funny, hugged him tightly.

I asked how they had reacted to the newest bomb, the one that had exploded just a few minutes ago, virtually under their feet.

"It's really not that scary," she said. "Once the explosion is over, everything's fine."

—Alma Guillermoprieto

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BOOKS

Unhappy Warrior

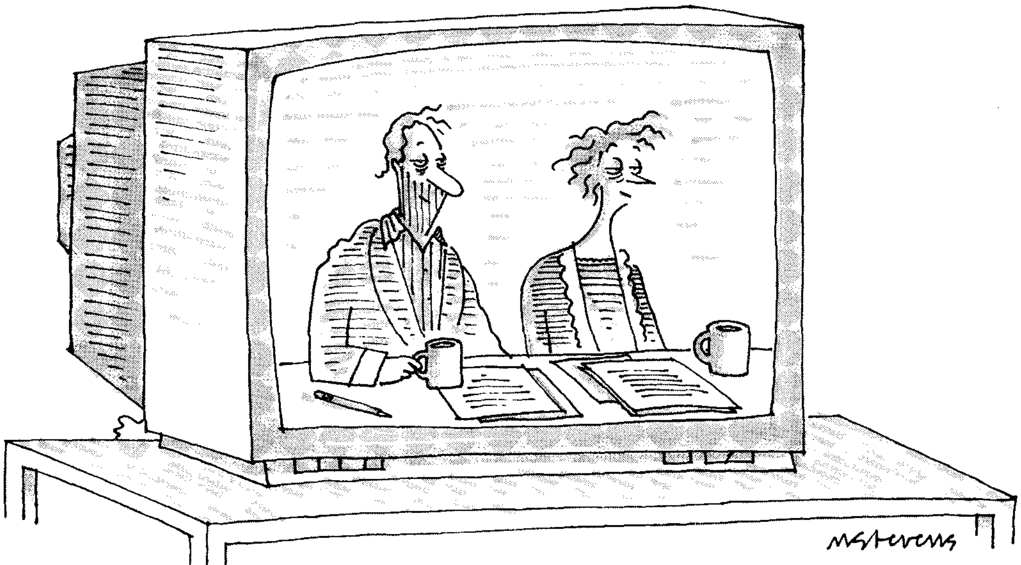
PAUL FUSSELL'S "Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War" (Oxford; $19.95) is more ambitious but less successful than his much admired "The Great War and Modern Memory." The earlier study, published in 1975, was a compact account of British soldiers' experience of trench war on the Western Front, the literature they wrote, and its effect on younger writers. The new volume deals with—or, anyhow, mentions—the experiences of American and British Empire land, sea, and air forces in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Pacific and the experiences of the civilian populations of the United States and the British Isles. Its topics include the English-speaking nations' military unpreparedness and their blunders; the training of their forces and the forces' perceptions of their leaders and their enemies; military obscenity, slang, and drinking; rumors, superstitions, and myths; soldiers' fear and disgust in combat; war propaganda and literature. Like "The Great War and Modern Memory," "Wartime" draws on poetry, fiction, and memoirs. It also works from histories and biographies, scrutinizes journalism and advertisements, and considers radio, movies, and popular music. Fussell uses some of his sources as documents to tell what the Second World War was really like, and others to illustrate his notions of falsity.

The book is brief and moves fast, punctuating its lively pace with jokes and surprises. (I was surprised, by the way, at how few of the wartime coinages on Fussell's lists are permanently lodged in the language. We know what "sad sack" means, but we don't say it.) The author's dexterity suggests showmanship—a vaudeville juggler tossing knives and hatchets so fast they glitter. Some of the performance is shtick, some original scintillation. All of it is less technically daunting and more readably entertaining than what one finds in many other war books. Fussell is especially good about the recent past. The technological changes since 1945 (television, for example) are less striking than the psychological ones he notes, such as our movement away from what now seem the astonishing sexual inhibitions of 1939-45, and from the period's overt and simple-minded snobbery: he found that young women who applied advertisers' cosmetics were shown marrying officers, never enlisted men.

Fussell is a literary scholar, who as a young man saw combat in our infantry in Europe. His sparkle is not just for fun. He has a message, which he states and restates:

> For the past fifty years the Allied war has been sanitized and romanticized almost beyond recognition by the sentimental, the loony patriotic, the ignorant, and the bloodthirsty. I have tried to balance the scales.
>
> The Second World War . . . was indescribably cruel and insane.
>
> There has been so much talk about "The Good War," the Justified War, the Necessary War, and the like, that the young and the innocent could get the impression that it was really not such a bad thing after all. It's thus necessary to observe that it was a war and nothing else, and thus stupid and sadistic.

And so on. "The Great War and Modern Memory" traced the literary steps by which the English-speaking publics became disillusioned with war—or, at least, with the traditional allure of glory. There's no reason to think that Fussell's readers imagine that the Second World War was painless. He underestimates them, and mars his work by allowing his message to become a mission. Moderately attentive readers will notice that in his eagerness to underline the war's stupidity Fussell sometimes contradicts himself. For example, he maintains that the English-speaking peoples were less devout in the Second World War than they had been in the First: "The Second World War was a notably secular affair" and later "Between the wars, 'belief' itself has eroded." Twenty pages along, though, he quotes, with contempt, American leaders' religious invocations, and derides Americans' belief that the war was "virtually a religious operation." His determination to stress the uncongeniality of military service occasionally sends him to undependable sources. His statement that "at one point there were said to be around 12,000 armed deserters in Italy alone, 2,000 of them British" conflates two entries in Evelyn Waugh's diaries. Both are hearsay, and Waugh takes neither seriously (and even when Waugh's diaries *are* serious the editor's frequent corrections show they're not always guides to fact). And many of Fussell's emphases are so idiosyncratic that they're ahistorical. In his discussion of food rationing in England he never mentions that, possibly for the first time in history, the poor of England were as well nourished as the



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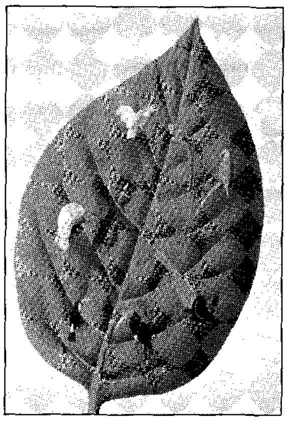

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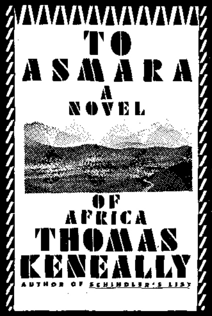

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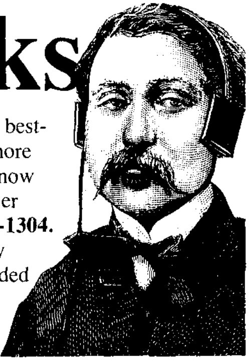

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rich; he tells us that everybody's meal were monotonous, but by omitting t tell us as well that poor British children at last got enough milk and tha half the population was better fed tha it had ever been, he gives a mistake account of wartime deprivation. A lo of the time, Fussell isn't balancing th scales but unbalancing them. Zig don't correct zags.

Fussell is angry, opinionated, capricious, and arrogant. He digresses t unload his social, literary, and politica prejudices. As far as I'm concerned Fussell is at liberty to detest E. B White's wartime writing, but I can' help feeling that the author misrepresents the period he is portraying whe he pays more attention to White tha to Hermann Göring. It would hav helped if Fussell had qualified hi countless disputable assertions with " think." I know three talented men wh attended a certain special school in th United States Army. The first though it was funny, the second wicked, an the third ennobling. Fussell isn't th only one who escaped to tell us. An many of his omissions trouble me. I'l mention just one: he scarcely touche on the ordeal of blacks in our Ji Crow armed forces, although there ar plenty of sources that discuss it.

A few of the sore points Fussell raises are worth attention. One is the inferiority of Allied matériel, a subject often mentioned in military histories and then dismissed or taken for granted. I don't know of any book for the general reader that treats the subject comprehensively. Clay Blair, for example, in his history of the submarine war in the Pacific, "Silent Victory," exhaustively discusses the failure of our torpedoes, but he has no reason to discuss the inadequacy of our tanks. Max Hastings' "Overlord," a book Fussell cites, says that "British and American soldiers were called upon to fight the German army in 1944-45 with weapons inferior in every category save that of artillery," and supplies details. Fussell partly accepts the cliché that our side's productivity won the war, and partly argues that victory was not automatic. His bias prevents him from talking about heroism in combat except where he can find a hero to debunk. Yet heroism *is* an aspect of wartime behavior, and when we forget the inferiority of so much of our equipment we inadvertently belittle the heroism of our men—and, by the bye, the chievements of German and Japanese ndustrial design.

Another interesting subject is what Fussell calls "chickenshit"—inessenial regulations enforced in ways that oldiers see as "petty harassment of the weak by the strong" and "sadism hinly disguised as necessary discipline." There's no doubt that authority was abused—it always is—and really good leadership is always rare. But I'm not sure that Fussell can distinguish harassment from necessary discipline. He has the poor judgment to describe he Nazis' abuse of death-camp inmates as "chickenshit raised to the highest power." And he says that chickenshit 'never has anything to do with winning the war," and rages at military nattiness. He's furious at General Paton for requiring his men to tie their neckties and tuck them in their shirts, and comments, about a formal photograph of generals taken in France in October, 1939, that from their "spiffy" uniforms "you could almost predict hat the British are going to be thrown out of France and the French totally defeated." There are other, keener udges, among them Alan Brooke, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who in November, 1939, was a lieutenant-general in France. He received *his* earliest intimation of impending calamity at a parade of General Corap's French Ninth Army: "Seldom have I seen anything more slovenly and badly urned out. Men unshaven, horses ungroomed, clothes and saddlery that did not fit, vehicles dirty."

A military force assembles a very arge group of very young men (Fussell stresses their youth), gives them access to lethal weapons, and asks them to do things they don't much want to do, like tidying their barracks. Many of the armed forces' demands also appear urgently in civilian life. We want every driver to keep sober and to maintain his vehicle. We need meticulous performance from airline mechanics, say, and people who work in nuclear plants, and oil-tanker captains. The traditional military method makes exaggerated demands to get sensible ones met. I'd like to know how well this technique works. How often does setting difficult standards create discouragement and resentment, and how often does it produce better performance? Fussell doesn't care. He concludes this section by linking soldiers' foul language to their resentment of Second

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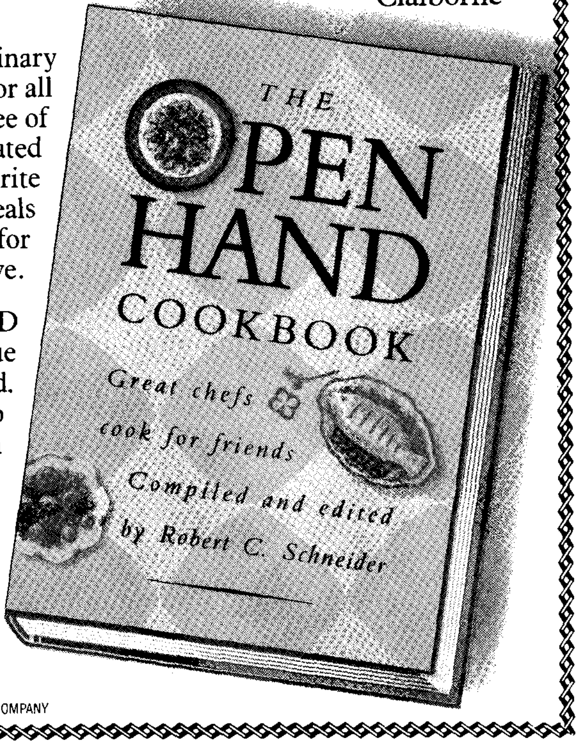
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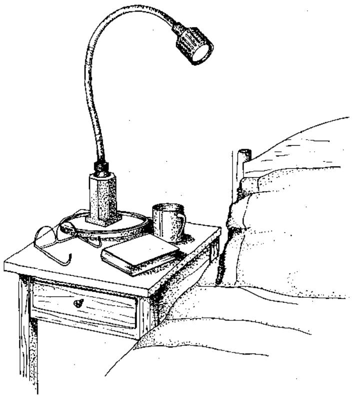

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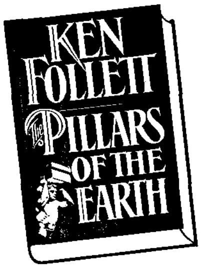
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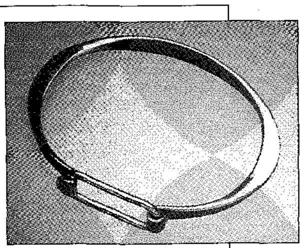

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World War chickenshit. My impression is that, except, perhaps, for Cromwell's Ironsides, soldiers have always cursed, used obscenity, and invented cant.

A last subject is squeamishness. Fussell is angry because, he says, the general public has no idea of the exceedingly unpleasant effects of modern weapons on the human body. He doesn't want us to imagine people dying quickly of neat bullet wounds, and quotes the testimony of bombed civilians as well as the memories of soldiers to give us an idea of dismemberment and ugly deaths. He then wanders off to extoll the sturdy candor of earlier periods. He adduces the severed limbs and heads that adorn the borders of the Bayeux tapestry, a speech about severed heads and limbs in "Henry V," and Goya's "Disasters of War." He deplores "a difference in sensibility, especially in the ability of a pap-fed mass public to face unpleasant facts." After reading Fussell's digression, I made a brief foray into medieval literature, and quickly turned up such a surfeit of severed limbs and decapitations that it occurs to me that they were a cliché—a literary convention that, for all I know, was designed, like the clean bullet wound of our own time, to spare the squeamish of the past the contemplation of the really messy wounds inflicted by maces and crossbows. Never mind. The question of sensibility—squeamishness versus candor—is a genuine puzzle. We read that Hitler ordered the July 20th conspirators slowly strangled, and watched the films of their death agonies with delight. If those movies still exist, should we watch them? Do we in some sense owe it to those unfortunate heroes to suffer their suffering? I don't know. We do know that when Western societies were less squeamish about real-life mayhem than we are today—when a hanging, drawing, and quartering attracted a substantial turnout—they were also more violent. How tough, how callous, how squeamish ought we to be to cope realistically with the modern world? The question affects the entire tone of a society—public policy, education, everyday interchanges, and, of course, all forms of artistic expression.

"Wartime" appears at a moment when all-out war between the great powers is unlikely. In retrospect, the Nazi and Japanese ventures into ex-

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ansion look like the last of the old-ashioned wars for loot, in which the de that occupied the enemy's terri-ory, stole his treasure, and enslaved is population finished richer and tronger. In 1989, it no longer appears ossible to steal wealth or conquer ower. Nowadays, wealth and power epend on the quality of a nation's orking population, and that's why he problem of motivation—sticks or arrots, penalties or incentives, chick-nshit or golden parachutes—is acute n every society, and not just in its military. Even so, we have to go on hinking, reading, and writing, with-ut the evasiveness that Fussell cor-ectly despises, about force and killing, bout combat and the costs of combat. The reason is the persistence of old-ashioned people—bandits, like the Colombian drug moguls, and fanatics f every description—whose outlook is naffected by modern developments nd the calculations that modern na-ions have learned to make about the nprofitability of war. The job Fussell et himself needed doing. I just wish he ad done it better. —Naomi Bliven

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE PILGRIM'S RULES OF ETIQUETTE, by Taghi Modarressi, translated from the Farsi by the author (Doubleday; $18.95). There is not a strident moment in this beautiful novel, even though it takes place in Teheran in March, 1983, with a revolutionary clampdown in effect and a slaughter under way at the front in the war with Iraq. The book is essentially the interior monologue of a retired history professor, Hadi Besharat, a "lecturer on heavenly angels," who has become slightly unhinged by compulsory idleness and the squalor of the ongoing crisis. He has begun to see everyone "through the wrong end of the telescope": his wife, an actress who lost her livelihood when women were banned from the stage; his son, in America, who owns a failing car wash; and his former students, who have become Revolutionary Guards, with loudspeakers and machine guns. Even worse, he has begun to lose track of time, and spends his days sliding away from the disorienting present into "the world of counterparts—a world of people and events exactly like ours"

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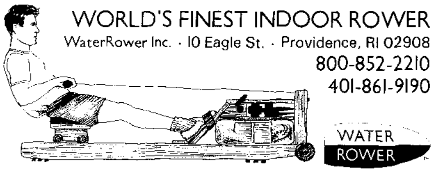

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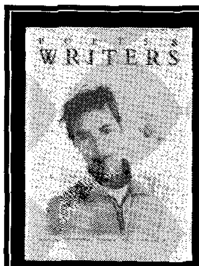

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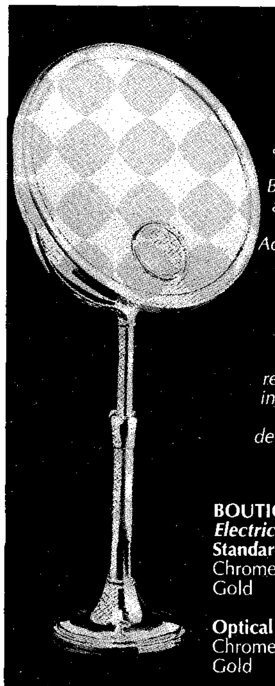

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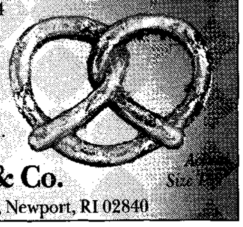

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but where angels embody eternity and memories are real. When he is not commiserating with his neighbors or suffering from "the memory-monster" in his mind, Hadi Besharat sustains himself with sensations—like the smells of eucalyptus and cardamom—and contemplates "the art of drawing arabesques in the air and inscribing words inside each other."

THE MAMBO KINGS PLAY SONGS OF LOVE, by Oscar Hijuelos (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $18.95). The fabulous Mambo Kings, formed by the lady-killing Cesar Castillo and his soulful brother Nestor, immigrants from rural Cuba, recorded the album of this name in New York City in 1956, when Harlem was jumping with Latin rhythm, and subway trains were safe at four in the morning on the way home from gigs in the Bronx. Now we find Cesar, a sixty-two-year-old drunk (*borracho*, that is), holed up in the faded Hotel Splendour, on 125th Street. He plans to reminisce, until his whiskey and his life run out, about the days before his trumpet-blowing brother was killed in a car crash, when they were featured on "I Love Lucy," and Cesar could drink and croon and screw every night and feel terrific. His thoughts move through the past in repetitious swirls, like a favorite record played again and again. The story is so utterly American it's a wonder we haven't heard this particular version of it before, and a credit to Mr. Hijuelos that we're hearing it now, in a voice supremely lusty, and full of sadness.

GENERAL

RAVENS IN WINTER, by Bernd Heinrich (Summit; $19.95). Mr. Heinrich is a professor of zoology at the University of Vermont. This admirable book describes four winter-long periods of studying at first hand the group behavior of ravens, the principal aim being to determine if ravens, which are among the most artfully articulate of birds, tend to flock to an abundant source of food (a carcass) in response to alerting "recruitment" calls from the discoverer of the bonanza. The main site of the study was a tar-paper cabin in a wilderness area in Maine, and it was conducted in subzero cold, in deep snow, and in acute discomfort—with the author often slogging fror his cabin to a blind overlooking meat bait in the dark before daw and returning only after the sun ha set. He found, of course, an answe —a persuasive one—to his question and he craftily keeps it to himsel until the end, leading us to i through page after page of vividl detailed journal entries. But, he tell us, the satisfaction of making a contribution to science was not his onl reward. It was the doing that mostl mattered: "Nature is so *exciting* . . . We then try to justify [ou work] . . . as if it has some 'useful application. But, really, we *do* i because it is fun."

STRANGERS FROM A DIFFERENT SHORE A HISTORY OF ASIAN AMERICANS by Ronald Takaki (Little, Brown $24.95). Although the Asians wh have immigrated to the Unite States—Indians, Southeast Asians Filipinos, Chinese, Koreans, Japanese—are diverse, their experience are not. With the exception of th most recent immigrants, Asian were imported to do cheap labor, an found that they were rejected a citizens and as neighbors. The author, whose forebears were Japanes plantation workers in Hawaii, i calmly factual in his account of ove a century of exploitation and injustice. He tells us that the status o Asian Americans began to change i the Second World War, whe India, China, and the Philippine became our allies, but until 195 Asians remained "aliens ineligible t citizenship" under the Naturalization Law of 1790. Mr. Takaki's far-ranging research conveys the personalities and the hopes of many o these immigrants. In his last chapter discussing the anxieties of Asia Americans today, when they are ostensibly successful and accepted, h points out that being praised as "model minority" is a new kind o burden.

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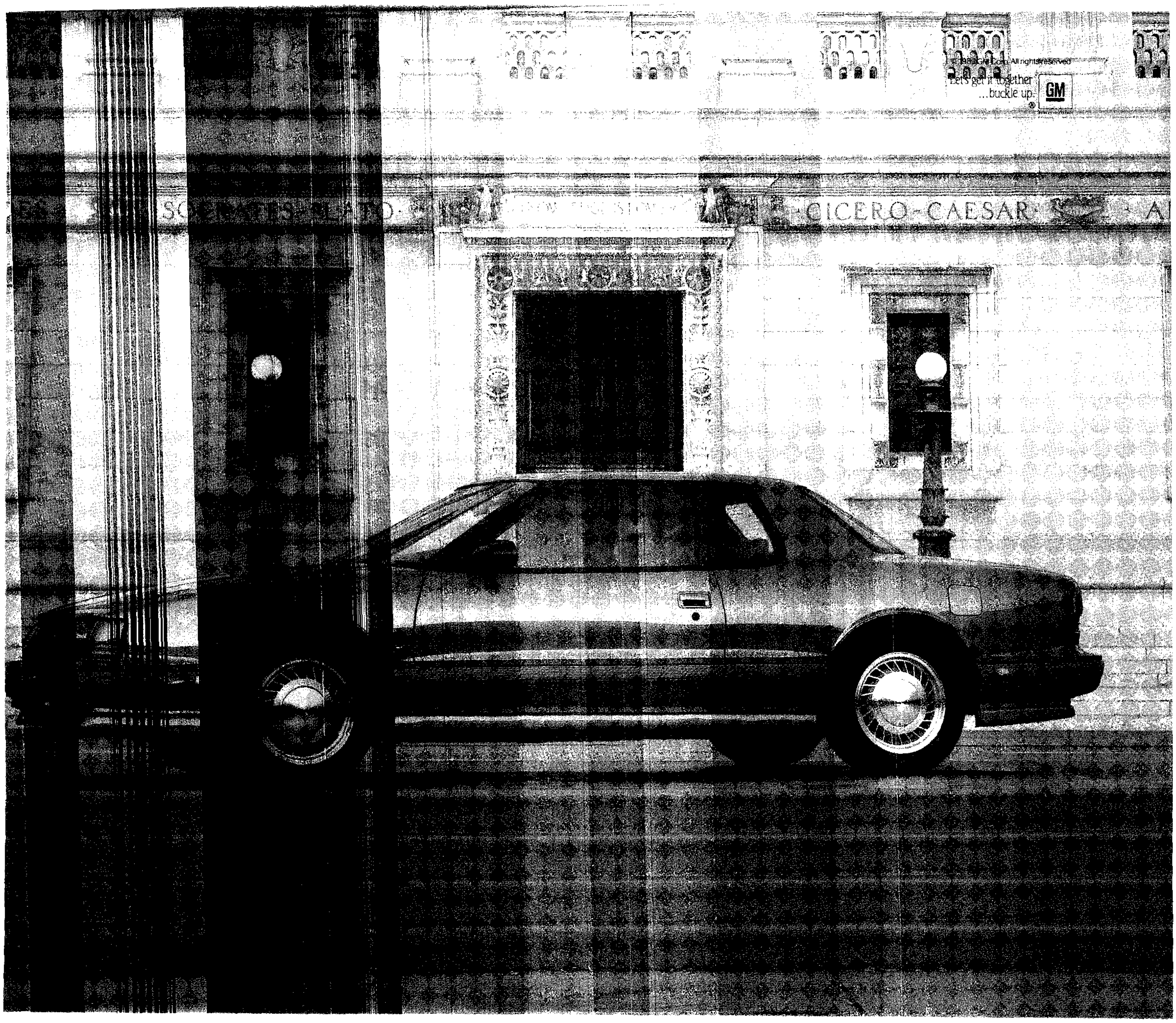
SETTING IT STRAIGHT

In some editions of today's Food section, an incorrect number of jalapeno peppers was given for Elaine Corn's Southwestern chicken salad recipe, which appears on page 12. The recipe should call for 2, not 21, jalapeno peppers.—*Sacramento Bee.*

Too late!



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